

a. 2. 116.



*Fides Christi*  
*in Academia Oxoniensi.*



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*Fides Christi*  
*in Academia Oxoniensi.*

~~L. 2015~~



ENTER INTO THY  
CLOSET.

Sold by Io: Martyn at y<sup>e</sup> Bell in S.<sup>t</sup> Pauls C. Yard.



By Edward Walsenhall

**Enter into thy Closet :**

OR, A  
**METHOD**  
AND  
**ORDER**  
FOR PRIVATE  
**DEVOTION.**  
WITH  
AN APPENDIX  
Concerning the Frequent and Holy Use  
OF THE  
**LORDS SUPPER.**

**The Fourth Edition.**

*Is not this a brand pluckt out of the fire ? Zech. 3. 2.*

London, Printed for John Martyn, and are to be sold  
at the Bell in St. Paul's Church-yard. 1672.

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TO THE

Right Reverend Father in God,

S E T H

Lord Bishop of Sarum.

*My very good Lord,*

**H***E who writ this, though  
for many reasons he  
desired the world should  
be ignorant of him, yet could  
not content himself, it should be  
ignorant it very much owes to  
your Lordship both him, whoever  
he is and this his book, whatever  
it is: Him in the care you have  
ever exprest towards him and it,  
in that same discourse of yours,  
though but casual at Table, gave  
A occasion*



occasion to its composure (for the  
main,) and publication. It now  
the third time, in so short a  
space, seeing the light, hath al-  
most flattered its Author into an  
apprehension, that if the world  
continue in that little Sobriety  
and Devotion, which (alas!) a  
small part of it at present wears,  
this may live the longest of any  
thing he may do. At least he begs  
you'l think, when he inscrib'd it  
to you, that he thought it might:  
However, should he ever be blest  
with marble, he assures you'twill  
not suffice him, that he hath  
writ your name in water. God  
preserve your Lordship, what you  
truly are, an Ornament to your  
age and Country, a Blessing to  
his Church, and a Refuge to  
the soberly Religious.

AN



A N  
ADMONITION  
TO THE  
READER.

**W**Hat it is the fashion to call an *Epistle to the Reader*, or, if it be somewhat longer, a *Preface*, the Author stiled an *Admonition*, or *Advertisement to the Reader*, that by a more unufal title he might the more surely draw him to read it, before he doth the Book.

A 2

And

## *An Admonition*

And the first thing, which he admonisheth thee of, Good Reader, is that thou neither question nor scruple what judgment he is of, before thou hast considered what he here saith : nor that when thou shalt have read a little way into the book, thou make such conjectures of its Authors opinion, as to conclude the book fit only to be laid aside by thee, because he who writ it, may haply dissent from thee in some matters. He very little  
med-

*to the Reader.*

meddles with any matters here, in which it is likely that any sober Christian dissents from him. A disrelishing expression, or a Chapter should not be warrant enough to thee for thy sentencing him this or that, and rejecting what else he says for thine and common good. Perhaps he may make mention of a *Common-prayer-Book*, or *Holy-days*, only to draw in them, who will hear of no devotion which rejects these, but

A 3      exe-

## *An Admonition*

execrate it still as *Fanatical*, to the reading his Book, and thereby to a more serious and Christian use of those things, than what all are guilty of. Perhaps, on the other side, he may be in good earnest, and thinking them right Christian and useful, command them to thy practice, and direct thee, so to use them, as that thou shalt by such use of them begin less to quarrel with them. Either design is honest, and it is no matter whether  
whether

## *to the Reader.*

whether it is, which he hath, nor who, or what he is. He would only have three to take him for a man of serious and sober principles, and one who would have all that profess Christianity to be such also : (and such thou must either take him to be, or else, being that thou knowest him not, and so canst not know him to be otherwise, thou art uncharitable :) And as being such, that, which he endeavours here is to bring thee seriously upon thy

A 4                      knees

## *An Admonition*

knees before God, there to examine thine heart and actions according to that Christian rule, which indispensably enjoyns thee Charity, Meekness, Moderation, Peaceableness, and such sweet Virtues ; which if thou do but use thy self to, thou wilt judge thy self no otherwise a Christian than as these Christian Graces are in thee, and receive as a new-born-Babe, the sincere milk of the doctrine of godliness, come it to thee in what vessels soever.

Ano.

## *to the Reader.*

Another thing, which he hath to advise thee of, is matter of direction in the use of this Book: in which case his desire to thee is, that thou wilt first read over the Tables, which are annexed to it, and make the substance of what he there promiseth to treat of; that then if thou resolve to make use of this method for thy devotion (and, the Author thinks thou wilt, if thou have the patience to consider it, and canst obtain leisure of thy

A 5                      self.



## *An Admonition*

self to practise it) that thou wilt read the Book once or twice over, and endeavour by attent consideration to understand it; and when thou hast once got the Book thus into thine hand, the practice will soon grow easie (he is sure, at least, most sweet and blessedly delightful.) Be but perswaded to try it one month or two, and see if thou canst find in thy heart to be so injurious to thine own felicity, as to lay it aside again.

Some-

## *to the Reader:*

Somewhat too there should be said as to what is likely to be objected against the contents hereof. It may happily be conceived there are here some practices directed to in ordinary devotions, which are too high for every mans reach (as is meditating upon Scripture, in such sort as is here taught, endeavouring the mortification of sin in such rational methods, &c.) some circumstances too, as to the place of retirement, unne-

## *An Admonition*

unnecessary , or above  
most mens conditions, &c.  
As to the former of which,  
the Authors answer is, that  
patterns of this nature  
must not be set too low,  
for that men are apt rather  
to aim under than over ;  
that he thinks there is very  
little of pra<sup>c</sup>tice here, by  
which a plain capacity  
may not understand some-  
what, which he will con-  
clude to be his duty,  
though it may be he reach  
not all in that case ; and  
further both as to this and  
to

## *to the Reader:*

to the latter point supposed to be objected, that the higher matters and more curious circumstances are commended only to men of abilities, estates and leisure futable: Let all go as high as they can, and their devotions will be sure to be more compleat, than if they had aimed lower.

Now, which is all that shall be added, possibly some may think such Books as these needless at present, after so many extant in this kind already.

Here-

## *An Admonition*

\*The  
dreadful  
fire of  
London.  
Septem.  
1666,

Hereunto the Authors Apology might be, that the number of such books is much at present lessened by those \*mercyless flames out of which the providence of God saved this Book, ( when it was in a manner all printed off save this preface ) that this preservation of it is some excuse for its appearance, and presage that it may not be altogether fruitless: But this being waved, that which was his answer in the Preface, which those  
fore-

## *to the Reader:*

forementioned flames consumed, when the Book it self escaped, is, that he is not much read in our English Books, and so knows not what or how many of this nature are extant; but that of those, which it hath been his lot to see, he knows none, which do more aim at the hitting the *genious* and humour of every mans devotion (be he of what judgment he will) than he hath done in this and that, be the Reader a conformable person, or any  
of

## *An Admonition*

of the contrary perswasions, if he be but serious, and resolved not to reject the main, which he cannot but like, for a page or two, which though he may not much brook, yet he can scarce be very angry with; the Author believes such person will not think his pains to no purpose: However, that, in this hope he cannot but be confident, that the meer writing and publishing hereof will be a perpetual engagement to himself of a more strict

*to the Reader.*

strict and circumspect life;  
and that therefore, if in  
none other, yet in this re-  
spect, it comes not forth in  
vain : To which purpose  
he desires thee (good Rea-  
der) to help him with thy  
Prayers, as he hath endea-  
voured to help thee by  
the following Advice.

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A





A  
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OF THE  
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a preparatory Discourse and  
an Introduction to the rest.

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Enter



# Enter into thy Closet.

## OR, A METHOD FOR PRIVATE DEVOTION.

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### Part. I. CHAP. I.

*Of the necessity of Privacy, and  
those Christian Duties which  
require it.*

**T**Hat person can no wise be  
esteemed a serious and  
through Christian, up-  
rightly and cordially discharging his  
duty towards God, who is a stranger  
unto privacy, and useth not to with-  
draw himself from company, even  
B the



# A Method for

Part. I.

Chap. I.

the company of his nearest friends, presenting himself alone before God: For that, besides the worship of God, which we perform to him in the *publick assemblies*, and joyntly with the rest of the *Family*, of which we are members, besides, I say, praying, hearing, and receiving, &c. in the Church, and praying with the people of our own house, there are several religious duties to be performed by us, without which the power of godliness can never be kept alive in our hearts; nor the service, which before or with others we do unto God Almighty, be through, hearty and compleat, which duties can never be performed as they should be, if we are in company. To wit.

*First*, it is indispensably necessary that a Christian often examine himself, take account of his own state and actions, whether his heart be so steadfast in holy purposes as it hath been, or ought to be, or as he hath vowed to God it should be: whether his practices

## Private Devotion.

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Part. I.  
Chap. I.

practices of late have been answerable to such resolutions and engagements, as he hath made : or whether his heart be more indifferent and careless than it was, his actions more loose and irregular ; This, I say, is absolutely necessary to an holy life : for that without it, he may insensibly go back and grow worse, he may delay his returns unto God, or not return after several wandrings, and (if suddenly catcht) die without the particular repentance of many sins.

Secondly, it is as necessary that a Christian confess himself to Almighty God, that is, that having taken such an account of his wandrings, he acknowledge them, bewail them, and beg pardon of them before God.

Thirdly, because repentance cannot be without reformation, it is necessary that he consult and consider with himself how he may grow better ; what occasions of his sins there were, which may be avoided ;

Part. I.  
Chap. I.

what means of the contrary virtues, which may be used; and resolve seriously with himself, that these and these occasions he will avoid, these and these means use.

Now forasmuch as such resolutions can never be upright and firm, except made with deliberation, heed and thoughtfulness; and forasmuch as such deliberation cannot be taken in company, nor all things duly weighed, where we have a crowd of occasions and objects to take off our thoughts, it is therefore necessary that for such work we be alone: and in the other cases, because that examination of our selves must needs be very slightly and short which we make while we sit and talk with others; because also those confessions, which we make in publick or with others, may be, and most frequently are, too general to reach our particular case and sins, it is therefore necessary for the doing of them also, that we retire or go alone.

And

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And to conclude, because he that would keep himself close to the ways of holiness, must do all these things often, it is therefore necessary, that he be often alone, at least as often as with any tollerable convenience he can, and to that purpose, if his condition admit or will afford it, that he have a place convenient to retire to, which we will call a *Closet*.

Part. I.  
Chap. 2.

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## CHAP. II.

*Of the Situation and furniture of their Closet who have choice.*

NOW (it being supposed that my condition allows me so much choice, as that I might have it so) my *Closet* would I have no unpleasant place, as sweetly situated as any place of my house, that I might delight to be therein; and by no means a low or darksom room, but

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as

## A Method for

Part. I.  
Chap. 2.

Acts 10.9.  
Acts 1.13.  
and 20.8.

as high as I well could : for that so it will be most remote from the noise, company, and disturbance of the people who are busied usually below ; and besides that, some secret Property there is in such high and eminent places, whence we may behold the heavens and overlook the earth, which to me much raiseth the soul and elevates the affections, as if we derived or partaked more from heaven, by how much nearer we come to it. Our *Saviour* therefore used to go up *into a Mountain to pray* : and St. Peter went up upon *the bouse* for the same purpose, that is probably into an upper room such as the *Disciples* were assembled in. And if it might be, my passage thereunto should be through two other outer rooms, at least through one, the door or doors of which I might ever have shut when I thither retired, to the end that my voice, which many times I shall have occasion, for my own quickening, to use, might not be heard without.

The

## Private Devotion.

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The furniture of my *Closet* I would have a little more, than that of *Elisha's* chamber, *A Table*, a *Stool* and a *Candlestick*: and instead of his bed an hard *Couch* or great chair on which I might some times lean my weary or aching head: But a *Couch* the rather for that some times I haply might find it necessary to spend the whole night there, and might thereon take some repose. To these I would add a *Bible*, a *Common-prayer book*, two *Paper books* (which when filled must be supplied by two others) and a *Pen* and *Ink*. Another book or two (of which hereafter I may also see occasion) to add to these. A *Chimney*, against Winter's cold, to make the place endurable, if need be, a whole night, would be no contemptible convenience. If besides these, I there keep any thing, as *Students* do *Books*, *Gentlemen* writings, and *Ladies Medicines*, &c. all these I would have placed on one side, or at least, one side I would have free from them,

B 4                      against

Part. I.  
Chap. 2.  
2 Kings 4.  
1.

Part. I.  
Chap. I.

against which should either stand a table, or a *Praying desk* (that when occasion should be I might lay a book or paper before me) and the wall over such desk or table should be hung (if I were able to do it) with some stuff, of one colour, (Green the best) to the end that when there kneeling at my prayers, I might have in mine eye nothing to call away or divert my thoughts.

To any man, whose genius this proposál suits not with, I offer that practice of *Daniel* (chap. 6. 10.) who opening his window or casement kneeled down with his face thitherward and prayed. By this means the mind, by the sight of the visible heavens, is carried in its thoughts into the invisible, and more strongly contemplates and adores the Creator of all, their dwelling. But this is only practicable in the Country, or places of great privacy, and not at all seasons, because of the injuries of weather. I therefore prefer the other at least for constancy: both may be used in season.

Chap.

# Private Devotion.

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Part. I.

Chap. 3.

## CHAP. III.

### *Of most Common entrance into the Closet.*

**M***Y Closet* being thus fitted, it is supposed that my recourse thereto is either more or less solemn. At no time (except upon most earnest and hasty occasions) should my entrance thereto, want the solemnity of a *short* (but hearty) *Prayer*. For this being a place principally designed for my devout retirement, and the performance of those private acts of worship which I owe to God, it becomes, by this its end and designment, after a sort separate or sacred, a certain secret Chappel for my self; and may not therefore wantonly or slightly be by me entered into. I say, not by *Me*: for what ever it is to others, to me ought it to be reverend. As therefore, when our ordinary occasions



Part. I.

Chap. 3.

call us into (or through) Churches, we usually out of reverence to him, to whom those places are devoted, and in memory of those spiritual feasts, which we or our Christian brethren have there and in such places tasted, fall down on our knees and worship God, begging his blessing upon us and his people, as often as there assembled, and praising him for the benefits which we or his people have there partaken of; so when I come, though upon common matters, into my closet, yet considering with my self, that I am now in that place, wherein I have so often worshipped (or at least resolved often to worship) God, and had sweet converse with him, in memory thereof, and for reasons hereafter mentioned I would kneel down and pray, to this or the like effect.

My good God, whom I here frequently and with my heart worship, Bless me I beseech,

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II

seech thee in the affairs I go Part. I.  
Chap. 3.  
about. Keep my heart with  
thee, at least ever keep it up-  
right before thee: And as oft-  
en as I here present my self,  
let thy good Spirit be present  
with me, to dispose me unto,  
and assist me in thy service,  
through Jesus Christ my Lord  
and Saviour. *Amen.*

And having thus or otherwise, as  
I am able, or have opportunity pray-  
ed, I would forthwith apply my self  
to what I intended.

Now such course observed, as  
often as I enter my *Closet*, will be  
many ways advantageous to me:  
*First*, it will be a means to keep my  
heart much with God, and to recal  
it to him, in case my thoughts have  
too much wandred from him. It will  
make me spiritual in ordinary mat-  
ters and converse. *Secondly* it may  
be a means to procure a blessing up-  
on my undertakings. *Thirdly* I may  
the

Part. I. the better expect Gods presence  
 Chap. 3. there; when I come purposely to  
 seek him.

It needs not after this discourse, to admonish that we ever take heed what matters here we do. I would not choose this as a place of my vainer discourse, or free hours, as some do; who are ever severest in company, and allow themselves liberty in private or amongst their confidants, whom if they can but get into such a place, where neither mens eye, nor ear can reach them (as the closet for the main is supposed to be) their company shall be vain and frolick to as high a degree almost as any mens. *I take it, (and I am greatly deceived if I mistake it) for a certain argument that the serious belief of a God and of the World to come, is much wanting in his heart, who dare be naught, idle, or sinfully merry, if he can but get out of mans sight and cognizance.*

PART



PART II.

Treating of *Daily Closet Duties.*

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CHAP. I.

*That if I am a person of leisure  
I ought daily, twice in the  
day, to retire into my Closet  
for devotions sake.*

**I**T followeth now to be considered of my more solemn retirement or entrance into my *Closet*. Now that I account a solemn recourse thither, when my business there is purely devotion. And such recourse is either ordinary, or more special.

My

Part. II.  
Chap. I.

My ordinary retirement into my *Closet* should be daily; and that if my condition will conveniently admit, as most mens may, twice a day: oftner I may, as at noon, seldomer I well cannot.

- I am bound thereto upon the same grounds, upon which I am bound to pray twice a day: and the sum of them is, that the command faith, *Pray continually*; the meaning of which we cannot but take to be, (1.) either pray always when you may for other duties (that is, so much time as thou canst spare from the work of thy calling, and due care of thy body, and other offices of Charity and Piety, spend in that duty of prayer) or else (2.) (parallel to that of the *continual burnt offering*, which was called *Continual*, because ever continued in its course twice a day.) Keep a continual course of prayer morning and evening. And this the practices of the Saints in Scripture (which we may look upon as Exemplifications of

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of that forenamed command ) to wit, the practice of *David Praying Evening, Morning, and at Noon*, of *Daniel* as many times, and none that we read of less than twice, cannot but enforce upon us, as the least which can be our duty in this case.

If any think they are excused from private prayer twice a day, by their praying twice a day with the Family, of which they are a part, They are to understand, that there is no particular strict command, touching the nature of our daily devotions, prescribing them to be either publick or private, or both: but that it is most just and equitable that *God should have a liberal part of our time, as well as of our estates*: that therefore if our condition be such, that besides the time, which we spend in prayer with the Family (which no one, who would have God to bless his Family, can think he may neglect) we have convenient leisure from other necessary matters, it cannot be better bestow-

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Part. II.  
Chap. 1.  
Psal. 55. 7.  
Dan. 6. 10.

Dr. Ham.  
Pract. Cat.  
Lib. 3.  
Sect. 2.

Part. II.  
Chap. I.

ed, than in our *Closet*, and upon our *Souls*. And it will questionless be a piece of very sinful vanity, to trifle it a way, and omit what it might so well have been employed upon: According as in matter of my estate, if after sufficient necessities and conveniences provided for my self and Family, there do yet remain in my hand a portion of what God hath given me, I cannot but look upon it as my duty to supply therewith the necessities of those who want; and as my sin, for me idly to squander it away, which might have filled so many hungry bellies, or cloathed so many naked or ragged backs. Further, God having enjoined me the duty of prayer but left the particular frequency of it, after the nature of other free-will offerings, to my Christian discretion, I ought no to be therefore the more heedless; but rather, because I know my sacrifice will be ever accepted, how often soever brought with an honest heart, out of an holy ambition

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Chap. I.

ambition of pleasing God and sending up an odour of a sweet savour unto heaven, to bring it as often as I can : And surely twice a day I may present even my private devotions.

If I be single and in my own power, there is no question but I may : If I be the Master or Mistress of a Family, there is little question of it : If I be a servant, or one who works for my living, there is indeed somewhat the more question ; for that not only I may be straightned in time, but want the conveniency of privacy ; But yet even in this case, what hinders, but that being I can not do so well as I would, I may do so well as I can ? to wit, rising one piece of an hour ordinarily sooner, or lying down so much later, fall down upon my knees by my self at my beds side, and privately pour out my confessions and prayers before God. And what if my fellow servant be with me ? Why should I be a shamed to do, before him



Part. II.  
Chap. 2.

him, what he cannot but acknowledg he also ought to do? shall I not one day much more blush and be confounded at the omission of my duty before *Men* and *Angels* and *God* himself, than here at the performance of it? And which shame rather to be chosen? That before *God*, all *Men*, *Angels*, *Devils*, than this before one or two? That which is eternal, or this, which after I have once or twice despised, I shall be troubled with no more? that which hath a real ground in turpitude and sin, or this which ariseth only from a foolish bashfulness? Begin to do so, and after the first or second time, thou wilt never be ashamed of it: I assure thee at least thou wilt never repent,

This then should be my ordinary retirement twice a day.

Our more special retirement ought to be upon *Lords days*, *Holy days*, and our own *private Fast-days*, each of which will come hereafter to be considered. In the mean  
time

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time our daily retirement and devotions must be proceeded with.

Part. II.  
Chap. 2.

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## CHAP. II.

*Considerations to perswade to daily devotion and prayer in private.*

**A**ND to the end I may be sure to keep such course as before-said, let me sit down and seriously weigh.

First, the concernment, importance and vast moment of those things, which by prayer I am to seek and may obtain, above the other, upon which most of my time is spent. What is it of wordly goods, which will not pass away (at least as to me and my enjoyment of it) with my self? I dying, all dies with me: my estate, my honors, my friends, and all such, are no more comfortable to me, when death once appears; but happily a torment, being that

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that they are all now to be left. It is therefore but to the end of my threescore years and ten (if I should live so long) or thereabouts, that these can be good at all: And of these my threescore years and ten (which it is a thousand to one whether ever I reach) how many are already gone? Perhaps one Modyety, perhaps more. So then, all those things which my other time seeks, are of a pitiful, short and transient concernment. But the grace of Gods spirit, an holy heart, a good conscience, reconciliation with my heavenly Father, these and such like, are not only of concernment for my present happiness, but for my eternal. The richest, honorablest and most worldly happy Man, if devoid of grace, an enemy unto God, conscious to himself of villany, cannot in all his abundance here enjoy or like himself, much less either account himself or be accounted, an happy person. For what can that man acquiesce in, whose  
own

own heart calling him a rogue, lays a fatal necessity upon him to hate and to be ever and anon ready to execrate himself? Certainly there is no present possible happiness, which is comparable to that blessed calm and quiet, which ariseth from the sense of a Mans own upright heart and discharged duty. Inso-much that were there no such thing as an heaven to come, I should not fear to pronounce, that that man neglects those things which are of greatest conducement to his present happiness, who neglects to seek unto God, to commune with his own heart, to set all straight, and to reclaim himself to an holy life, the great means by which such peace, the most real felicity in the world, can be had. But suppose we such a person ready to dy, *and it said unto him, Thou fool this night shall thy soul be taken from thee;* his peace being unmade with God, himself unacquainted with heaven, his conscience telling him that all his time hath

Luk. 12.20

Part. II. hath been spent upon what he must  
 Chap. 2. now leave, and no provition made  
 Rom. 11. (but of a *treasure of wrath against*  
 12. *the day of wrath*) for that eternal  
 state, into which death is his entrance; is he not now a most unhappy wretch? Is it not to him a pain equal to the pains of death to think he must leave all? Hath he not therefore by devoting himself to this world, and scraping together such an ample portion thereof, only made himself more miserable, and that in this present life? For is there any misery here, like to that anguish, which racks such a soul upon his now instant departure? And would I, then, to spend my time as that I might by the spending of it, become more miserable than any, save those who have lived as I? Would I so spend it, as that the very thinking or reflecting, how I had spent it, should then most torment me, when I have most need of comfort, to wit in my dying hour? And yet thus do all men spend their days  
 who

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who neglect their devotions, or duties of daily address unto God.

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But further, suppose we such a person dead; and we have him stript of all even his imaginary happiness, naked of every thing save his sins: Of these *his bones are full and they shall lye down with him in the dust:* Job. 20. 11. His *works follow him* and his *wages meet him*. Evident therefore it is, that what he hath spent his life upon, is now of no concernment or moment to him at all, any otherwise, than to render him for ever as miserable as he can be. And is this a desireable end, for a man all his days to be driving at; to be miserable in life by reason of an evil conscience, or an impossibility of liking and loving himself; to be miserable in death, by the advancing of that disquiet, his former torment; and most miserable after death by the perfection of that and all other mischiefs? Whereas if some of those days which the world employed had been taken up in seeking unto God

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God how might that portion have sanctified all the rest, have led him to a right improvement of what he got and that improvement of all been an unspeakable pleasure and content to him here, and hereafter have wrought him an eternity of blessedness! Not to mention that unspeakable satisfaction, which the hearty performance of such devotions, through the blood of Christ, would have filled him with, which we may hereafter consider. Whoso therefore truly loves himself will love his *Closet* and his *Prayers*.

Secondly, let me weigh the *Reasonableness* hereof, that God should have a *considerable part* of my *Time* who hath given me *so much* for my *self*, and the *unreasonableness* of the *contrary*. Let me deal ingeniously: may not God well expect more of my time, than what is by any law set apart or consecrate to this worship? And it being the genuine Evangelical sense of the fourth commandment, keep all thy life an ho-  
ly

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ly rest from doing thy own works delighting thy self and acquiescing ever in the Lord, will it not in a good measure hold thus, Rest as much as thou canst to thy devotions, spend as many hours as thou canst with God? Or suppose that this Law would not in equity bind me hereunto (which it seems to do) is it not reasonable that there should be free-will-offerings of our time as well as of our Estates? And will there be any better way found for the employing of what we can spare thereof, than the thus sanctifying and devoting it unto God? I am confident whatever mens practices may be, their consciences cannot gain-say but do highly approve and commend to them what is pressed. We may complain fondly of the shortness of time; but evident it is that we spend much upon this world, much upon our gains, much upon our pleasures, much upon our ambitions, much also upon those necessary acts of life, eating, Drinking



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ing, Sleeping, and much too upon ( God knows ) we know not what. Now let those who account themselves to have least leisure, find but time enough to consider, when they go to bed every night, how much time they have lost, or trifled away, that day, and setting it down every night, reckon at the weeks end, and see, to how many hours it will amount. Do so but one week or two, and see if you do not blush at the ordinary excuse for neglect of prayer, that you have not time. For the issue will be of these two, the one; either my whole time hath been really imployed, and that upon my common affairs and necessary care of my body, or else some part of it ( to wit, so much as hath not been imployed ) hath been trifled away. Now (*utrum horum*) Let me take which I please. If it be supposed all to have been employed, is it not most unreasonable, that worldly business and my body should have all, and God and my soul have none, or

next

next to none? Did God make me for himself, and allot me such a measure of time for his glory and for provision for my soul, and are they only some few minutes, which I can find either for him or it? Was, I say, every day given me for these ends, And can I spend all without considerable seeking either, as I do if I allow nothing to private devotion? *Ought I not therefore to lessen my business, rather than neglect the great ends of my being?* If on the other side, a considerable part of my time were lost and trilled away (as I dare say infallibly it will appear upon due account taken) is not this a most unreasonable part in me, that I can find *time to loose*, and yet *no time to pray*.

And further, Thirdly, it may somewhat quicken me, if I consider, that though it should be questioned whether it be strictly my duty *thus and thus oft to pray*, because there may seem to be wanting an express command, yet I cannot but be sensi-

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ble that is my duty *to pray*, and *to pray often*, (for this there are not wanting commands) and that therefore prayer being a duty and well-pleasing unto God, the more thereof is performed, the more acceptable service do I do to God: provided prayer thrust not out my other duties, the frequency, I say, can never offend, except in the case of neglecting other duties to perform it: and herein commonly men are not apt to be guilty. Suppose it therefore not to offend in this case, being that it is a duty, it must please, and please the more, by how much it self is more. Now this to ingenuity is no mean incentive unto prayer, that hereby I please my God, and delight heaven.

Fourthly, let me consider, that as Prayer it self is the most powerful and effectual means that a Christian can use for the effecting of all he would, so there is no prayer more powerful than that which is most frequent and importunate. In  
general.

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general, as to the power of prayer, it is such that it seems to have done violence to omnipotence it self; as in the case of *Moses* when God as though graciously held or restrained bids him *let him alone*: and in some cases, if duly performed, God hath as it were allowed it to command him. But what or whose prayers are they, which are thus powerful? Surely not theirs, who so seldom come to heaven, that if it were for nothing else, but because they are such strangers, they would not speed: but theirs rather, whose daily and frequent application of themselves to the throne of grace hath rendred them there well acquainted and favourites. We may therefore observe, that *the most absolute and encouraging promises of being heard, are made to the importunate suitors*. The widow in the parable, whom injustice it self could not deny, was such; and therefore sped because such, because she came so often. And that precept, each

Exod. 32:

10.

Isai. 45.2.

Luke 13:

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Mat. 7. 7.

gradation of which hath a promise proportionably attemperated and fitted thereunto, as it prescribes, so chiefly encourageth importunity, that is, *frequency as well as fervency*. It is not said, only *Ask*, nor only *Seek*, but both, and *Knock* besides. The last alone, *viz.* Knocking, implies frequency, and therefore much more do all the three. And to the *Knocking*, as being of all the three the clearest denotation or expression of importunity, it is promised *It shall be opened*: as if it had been said, those who only *ask* and *seek* may come to *speed*: but those who *knock*, those who are oft and earnest in their prayers, shall have the treasures of heaven *opened* and free to them, out of which to take full satisfaction and supply.

Now because all these things are so, therefore can it not be, but that the benefit of such practice must be *unspeakable*, which as another (and for the present the last) incitement unto daily private devotion is worthy

worthy my consideration. *First*, as to the inward temper of my heart (which rightly to dispose, and so disposed to keep, is a matter of the greatest concernment to an holy life) there can be nothing thought of more effectual, than such practice: nor can it indeed well be conceived, how that mans heart can be kept in a thorow sence of his duty, and close with God, who maintains not some such daily course of devotion as is under present consideration.

1. The maintaining hereof will keep alive in me a continual fear and awful apprehension of God: It will habituate me, in all my ways, often to think upon and remember him. *Now there is nothing, the apprehension of which is of more wholesom consequence unto a man, than of God, and his all-seeing eye.* One, who is sensible and mindful hereof, cannot be long vain, but, if he do forget himself at any time, will soon return to his old seriousness.

C. 4.

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2. Such practice will also much conduce to the keeping of me humble, as being sensible of ( because often minding ) my sins : my sins I say from my youth up to my present years, my perpetual proneness and frequent relapses unto vicious causes. These, being matter of my daily confessions, thoughts and meditations, cannot but in some good measure keep under any tawring or proud conceits, which I am apt to have of my self.

3. It will also make and keep me tender, affectionate, and truly Zealous in my service of God. There will be in me an habitual preparation for all duties; insomuch that I can no sooner be at them, and have engaged my self in them, but with a great deal of vivacity and readiness of Spirit, and with many inward meltings of heart I shall converse in them: this being not only my daily but my frequent practice, atleast frequent endeavour.

4. It must therefore much increase

crease all manner of Christian graces Part. II.  
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in my Soul; inasmuch as grace according as we now speak thereof, is nothing else but the due disposition and resolution of the soul, which as is evident will be the natural consequent and fruit of such practice.

*Secondly*, It will have a very wholesom influence upon my life, as in all cases else, so especially in this, that I shall at no time carry on any design which I dare not bring unto the test of heaven, and beg thereon the blessing of the God of Holiness.

*Lastly*, The mercies which I receive in my own person, in my relations, in all my affairs as procured and impetrated from God by these my daily and frequent prayers will be innumerable; and that inward comfort and clearness of heart, with which I shall entertain and receive these mercies, or any thing else, which comes from the hand of my gracious God, inexpressible. The same mercies evidently are not



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the same to all men, no more than are the same chastisements. But to whomsoever mercies are greater mercies, or afflictions less afflictions, it cannot be, but that to him who thus conscientiously daily converseth with God, all must be most kindly.

Now the consideration of all, which I have thus meditated, cannot sure but move me to some measure of diligence in these duties. If therefore at any time negligence begin to grow over me, it may be of good effect to read over and duly to weigh these or the like motives, that I may be quickened to resume, and proceed with my proposed course: and what that course should be, it follows in the next place that I consult.

## CHAP. III.

*Of the Substance of every days private devotion; To persons of leisure, Reading, Meditation and Prayer.*

**T**HE private devotion of every day will be different to particular persons, according as their conditions differ. From such who are servants or lead a servile life ( I mean all those who get their living by their daily labour, whose abilities of mind are therefore meaner and whose privacy more difficult ) from such I say no more than this may seem to be expected, that both in the morning being risen, and at night being about to lye down, they in the fear of God fall down before him and pray unto him; touching which directions will anon follow.

From those, whose way of life being more liberal, their abilities  
and.

Part. II.

Chap. 3.

Luk 12.

48.

and opportunities are greater, more may seem justly to be looked for, according to that rule, *To whom much is given, from them shall much be required.* Speaking therefore to such who have estates and leisure, and so may have opportune privacy, I suppose their daily private devotion cannot be compleat, except consisting of *Reading, Meditation and Prayer.*

Touching *private Prayer* it hath been before spoken, and nothing now can by such, whom the present consultation concerneth, be said for the dispensing with it, being it is even their duty who are of meaner quality and capacity and therefore much more theirs, who are of greater. Touching *Reading and Meditation*, if any suspicion arise, it will easily be removed (1) by those commands, which enjoyn us that we *Search diligently the Scriptures, that the word of God dwell plentifully in us, &c.* and (2) by such Characters of righteous persons as that they are such *whose delight is in the Law of the Lord*

John 5. 3.  
Ερευναν  
Coloss. 3.  
16.

Lord, and who *meditate therein day and night*. And certainly such commands being capable to be intended or remitted ( I mean being to be construed with some regard and ) according to that general rule aforementioned ( *to whom much is given from him much shall be required ;* ) cannot but be interpreted to require greater and more diligent *Searching* ( that is more of *Reading* and *Meditating* upon ) Scripture, from those, who have greater opportunity and ability to do it, than they do from others, who are meaner in both.

Of such an one therefore, who hath not time every day, or if he haply have, yet cannot read, it may be thought he dischargeth his duty of *searching the Scripture*, if in a way proportionable to his ability he endeavours to acquaint himself with Scripture, to wit, by a diligent attention to it, and inquiring of it ( as he hath conveniency ) when it is read or preached. But of such an one,

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one who can *read* and hath time to *meditate* on what he reads, and whom, it may be, it concerns to instruct others in the knowledge of Scripture (as being over them) of such an one, I say, being that more is required, than of the other, it cannot in reason be thought, that he hath done his duty by bare attention unto Scripture read, except he himself read and meditate therein. And he will very hardly (we may not fear to say, not at all) approve himself to be a Godly man, if he behave not himself as godly men did of old, that is, if he *delight not in the Law of the Lord*, and therein daily *meditate*. If I should doubt therefore, whether it be strictly my duty *day and night, morning and evening* to read the Scriptures and meditate, I cannot doubt (for I see plain evidence for it) that it is a Godly mans Character, one part of his practice as he is a Godly man, to *read* and *meditate*: if therefore I intend to be a Godly man, it must be my care and practice too.

Where-

Wherefore of these three *Reading*, *Meditation* and *Prayer*, seeing that none may be well omitted (at least not ordinarily neglected) it is requisite more particular consideration be had.

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Chap. 4.

## CHAP. IV.

*Of Reading the Holy Scripture.  
The most edifying method and  
manner of Reading it con-  
sulted of.*

**B**Y *Reading* here I understand reading the sole word of God: and this as it should constantly (for the main at least, if not ever) have a place in my daily devotions in private, so therein, methinks, will most conveniently take place in the beginning of them, on this wise. Being entred into my *Closet* for my devotions sake, it becomes me first in all humility and out of the fear of God, not out of custom, to fall down.

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\* Part. I.

Chap 3.

down before him, and in short, according to former direction to beg his blessing upon me and presence with me there presenting my self to worship before his majesty: To which purpose the Form \* already delivered may be proper either for use, or further direction, according as I shall see fit. This being done, forthwith let me apply my self to the reading some portion of the word, according to my prefixed course. And what course shall that be?

Modesty would presently answer, The same which the wisdom of the Church hath prescribed for publick use. And the truth is ( the Church consulting herein, as she ought, the edification of the people ) this order hath, in this point, the advantage of all other, that it will lead us to read over all the most useful parts of Scripture and those most frequently: to wit, the New Testament, excepting only some Chapters of the *Revelation*, three times a year; the

*Psalms*

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*Psalms* once a month; the *Old* Part. II.  
Testament ( excepting only the two Chap. 4.  
books of *Chronicles*, which are for  
the most part extant in the *Kings*  
and *Samuel*, and some other Chap-  
ters of other books, chiefly relating  
to the *Jewish* state) once in a year. But  
then if we consider its compliance  
with our present design, it hath  
these two exceptions lying against  
it. *First*, That the portions of Scrip-  
ture, by that order to be read daily,  
are greater than what every mans  
or most mens conveniency will af-  
ford time to read, and meditate up-  
on, as it is (supposed at present) best  
for a devout Christian to do. And  
then *Secondly*, That by this means a  
considerable part of the *Old* Testa-  
ment and some part of the *New* will  
be left out; which parts are not,  
questionless, without their use,  
though compraratively, not so ne-  
cessary for the publick commonalty  
as the other. And to the Churches  
prescription it may be said, that it  
was never the Churches intention  
to



Part. II.  
Chap. 4.

to prescribe this order for mens *Closets* in private, where she can neither take notice of their observing nor neglecting it, but only for publick edification and uniformity.

This order therefore being taken not to be so proper for our present purpose, the next which will offer it self, will be the natural order of the books in which they lye. Now this though not liable to the exceptions, which we found against the former (being that nothing then will be omitted, nor the Reader overburdened with too great a portion, being he is left to himself) yet hath his inconveniency, that it will detain the observer of it a great while in those parts of Scripture, which may not edifie him so much, as would the other: so that haply *Reading* shall be a duller and less spiritual an exercise, than it would be, did he more wisely order it. Yet hath it this advantage also, that the *Revelations* of God and eternal life being still clearer in each succeeding part of  
Scripture

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Scripture (I mean clearer in the *Propets* than in the *Law*, and in the *Gospel* than in either ) one months reading may make me see more into that of the former month, and all lead me to the magnifying of God for the present manifest Revelation of his will.

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These things being so, it may happily conduce most to our private edification if we keep strictly to neither of these orders, but observing the conveniences and inconveniences of each to our private purpose, according to our Christian discretion frame to our selves one out of both, which may have the commodities of both, and incommmodity of neither. And that may be such as this : To begin every Reading with a *Psalm*, or, where the *Psalms* are very long, with a good portion of one, taking the *Psalms* in their course : ( This I therefore commend, by reason of the exceeding usefulness of that Book of *Psalms* for prayer, it furnishing a man with petitions.

petitions, hymns and ejaculations of all sorts, and besides discovering very much of the harty practice of *Devotion* and *Godliness*) That being finish't, in the morning to take in order as the Books and Chapters lye, such a portion of the *Old Testament*, as my Christian prudence, considering my own conveniencies and occasions, shall judge fit: which, where the matter affords more work for *Meditation*, may be shorter, where less, larger. In like manner at evening, beginning with a like portion of the *Psalms*, take a part of the *New Testament*, as it lyes in order, greater or less, according as before said, it finds my devotion work. Some such course as this would I observe, till I had read over the *Holy Scripture* twice or thrice with such care, attention and meditation, as shall presently be described; by which time I should begin to be a little vers'd in it, and to know what parts of Scripture I used to read with greatest Christian advantage

vantage, which therefore afterwards I would read oftener than the other, setting always a mark at the name of each book, as they stand in the *Table* at the beginning of my Bible, when I had read that book over, that so I might know how often I had read each, lest I come too long to neglect the reading of any. This as to the *Order* of my *Reading*.

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Chap. 4.

Psal. 25.

14.

Having now my work thus orderly before me, it remains in the next place that I look to the best *manner* of doing it: whither belong the following rules.

*First*, That I endeavour to read with composedness of mind and attention, not only to the sense, substance, or subject matter of what I read, but as to the very expressions of it. For that the very expressions of Scripture are not only very useful in prayer ( God loving to hear his children call upon him in his own language ) but do also many times carry in them such secret emphases and force, as shall much comfort

comfort, support, awe, and otherwise affect the heart which considers them.

*Secondly*, That I be sure, as I read, to observe the scope and drift of that portion of Scripture, which I read. For as to particular passages, it may so happen, that the plain Reader may many times scarce understand them, they puzzling even learned heads: but as to the scope of the whole, as to that which the *Holy Ghost* chiefly drives at, this may be commonly more easily understood: and this being understood doth not only ensure me of so much benefit as I have understood of it, but will give special light unto those darker places, whose meaning I do not so well conceive.

*Thirdly*, That if ever I intend this part of my devotion, to wit my *Reading*, should be acceptable to God, or otherwise than a witness against my self, I resolve upon the impartial practice of whatsoever I by reading find to be in Scripture  
com-

commanded, and eschewing of Part. II.  
 whatsoever I there find forbidden. Chap. 5.  
 Such godly purpose will encrease  
 my very knowledge; *For the secret* Psal. 25.  
*of the Lord is with them that fear* 14.  
*him, and he will teach them his Sta-*  
*tutes:* whereas others, who bring  
 not a resolution of such conscientious  
 practice, but barely inquisitive  
 diligence, may come to be in a great-  
 er measure ignorant of his mind.

## CHAP. V.

*Of Meditation, and the most  
 edifying course in it.*

**T**Hese rules being thus observed,  
 and a certain portion of *Holy*  
*Scripture* thus read, it will be proper  
 for me in the next place to proceed  
 to *Meditation*.

Now *Meditation* here I take not  
 for the simple thinking of any thing  
 divine, which shall offer it self, but  
 for

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for an orderly and serious consideration of the particulars following.

1. Upon that portion of Scripture which I have read.

2. Upon my own state and ways.

3. Upon the prayers ( that is, Confessions, Petitions and Thanksgivings ) which I am presently to offer up unto God.

Touching the first there are these three things for me to consider.

*First*, If I have not, as I read, been able to understand the design and drift of the Holy Ghost in what I have read, let me consider touching that, and by a short review of what I have read, comparing the parts or several materials spoken of, and attending how they hang together, endeavour to comprehend their substance and scope. He reads to no purpose who reads not thus ; for it is not repeating the words of Scripture, but understanding and digesting their sense and substance which is to be accounted reading the Scripture : and one Chapter thus read is worth ten hastily run over.

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*Secondly*, If there be in what I have read any difficult or harder place, which seems to contain any matter of practice or article of faith (I mean which is likely to instruct me in any thing necessary to be believed or done in order to my salvation) that let me consider, and endeavour thereof to find the meaning. As to those difficulties, which concern controversies, that is questionable Opinions in Divinity, or inquiries into matters of meer knowledge or speculation, (such things, which when they are known there is an end of them) these may be very well over-look'd by an ordinary person. As for instance; Reading *Acts* 13. (the last Paragraph or partition of the Chapter, which begins *verse* 44. ) I find therein (*viz.* *verse* 48. ) a certain difficult expression, *As many as were ordained unto life believed.* What *believing* and what *life* (i.e. heaven and blessedness) mean I know? but what *ordained unto life*

D means



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means, I doubt ; and truly need not much trouble my self to inquire. Sufficient it is that I conclude from thence, that *all they who shall obtain everlasting life are believers* (not one unbelieving or ungodly person shall ever enter into heaven ) and therefore particularly that I resolve upon an honest cordial receiving of the Gospel as my duty, if ever I intend for happiness. Again, reading *Exodus 32.* I find that *Moses took the Calf they had made and burned it in the fire, and ground it to powder.* How the burning Gold in the fire, which only purifies it ordinarily , should come to make it friable or brittle, that it might be ground unto powder, I need not stand to inquire. A shorter and better way it is, to believe the matter feasible, and this relation true, as being part of Gods word ; all I need to conclude thence is, that Idolatry isto be destroyed, and that in such sort as the people may not return to it again, but rather loath and abominate it, as we do

do that which passeth through our bodies (for which reason *Moses* made the people to drink off the powder of the Calf: ) and that it is the wisdom of Magistrates, whom it concerns, to destroy it, as it was *Moses's*, to find out and contrive such ways or methods of destroying it. This is I say as much as can concern any ordinary person, and as for the curiosity touched, it may safely be neglected. We give not rules to make a Divine, but to direct a Christian. Now all such difficulties and curiosities being left out, I presume the difficulties which arise in practicable matters will be but few. And for my help herein, it will be meet I reflect upon that which (according to the former rule) I found to be the scope or drift of that Scripture, and consider the difficulty with some relation or regard thereto, observing the occasion, upon which that expression came in. This will help me very much many times. But for my fur-

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Chap. 5.

ther help therein, if I am able, it would be expedient I had some short gloss, or book explaining such matters: and truly what book to pitch upon, as best in this case, is not easie to resolve. For I suppose there are not many books of notes or Commentaries upon the whole Bible in English, which meddle only with necessary and practicable matters, omitting controversals, which a private Christian, to his better edification, may well spare. For the *New Testament* I much admire Dr. *Hammonds* Paraphrase, and could ten thousand times wish such a piece were extant upon the whole Scripture. But yet it is too difficult for every plain Reader. Bishop *Hall* hath a Paraphrase upon the whole Bible, which comes much neerer to our present design: But I fear this is scarce. The frequentest, best, and innocentest that I know is *Diodate's Annotations*: they have indeed a *Geneva tang* now and then, but pretty soberly. Some such book according

ording as I can get, I would furnish my self with, which I might consult touching the meaning of such difficult places as my Christian discretion should tell me to be practical, and for my necessary edification.

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*Thirdly*, Having thus found out the design of that whole portion of Scripture which I have read; and the meaning of such particular Texts as I shall have occasion to search into, let me in my meditations cast over again, or recollect the substance of it, and consider, what am I the better for the Reading hereof?

1. Am I instructed or further confirmed in any matter of faith?

2. Am I taught any duty which before I either was ignorant of, or neglected? Do I here find any precept or command which I never before took notice of, or had forgot, &c.

3. Is there any thing which may quicken me to any duty, in which I am slack, or deter me from any sin

to which I am prone? Any threatening of Gods wrath? Any example of his judgments? Any promise of mercy? Any instance of blessings on his diligent servants?

4. Is there any thing which may strengthen me in any temptation, comfort me in any affliction, distrust? &c.

5. Is there any particular emphatical or affectionate speech which may at any time quicken me? Any proper petition, confession, invocation, thanksgiving, or the like, which may be of use to me in prayer, or otherwise?

6. Is there any thing which I can observe of the experiences of holy men of old? Any thing of the deceitfulness of sin? Any thing, whence I may learn better my own heart, either as to what it is, or what it ought to be?

Through such heads as these may my meditations briefly run: which heads till I am perfect in, it may not be amiss to open this my book and examine

examine what I have read, according to these directions laid down. And if I am able, I shall find it an incredible benefit, in the end of these my meditations to use my pen, whensoever by any reading I have gained any more remarkable benefit, and to register in one of my Paper books (reserved ever for this purpose, which for distinctions sake I may know by the name of my *Memorial*) that particular which I have gained: in which I need to observe no other method, but only to write all the notes which I take out of any one book, as of *Matthew, Mark &c.* together, that so at my second or third reading that particular book over, I may see, what the second or third reading of it advantaged me more than the first. And these notes thus taken, because intended as helps to my memory, I must be sure to find time within a convenient season to review. This is a profitable course for me to observe in my ordi-

Part. II. nary meditations upon the holy  
 Chap. 5. Scriptures.

The next thing which my meditations are to be employed upon, is upon my particular *State* and *Ways*, which I am in some measure to take notice of, as well that I may be more circumspect in such particulars, wherein I shall find greater need of circumspection, as that I may be able to address my self to God in a way suitable to my condition. *For my condition varying, my prayers ought to vary accordingly.*

First, Then, as to my *Ways*, that is Thoughts, Words and Deeds, (for all these the Scripture compriseth under that one term of our *Ways*.) These all know to be either good or bad. And as to both, I am to look both backward and forward.

1. I am to look back and consider with my self what new temptations have befallen me; how far my heart hath closed with them and been overcome by them (1) As to matters of *Commission*, whether  
 of

of inward sins, such which are act- Part. II.  
ed in the mind ( as evil Thoughts, Chap. 5.  
Desires, Resolutions or Designs ) or

of outward and bodily acting; as  
Words and Deeds. Hath not my

discourse been Untrue, Unsavory,  
Haughty, Passionate, or the like?

my actions Ungodly, Dishonest,  
Uncharitable, contrary to Sobriety?

And ( 2 ) as to *Omission*. Have I

left nothing undone which I was to  
have done, which I had resolved to

do, and had opportunity for? All  
this, as far as present convenience

will admit, being duly considered,  
is seriously to be laid open before

God in my following Prayers, both  
as to confession thereof, and sup-

plication for pardon and future  
grace against such miscarriages.

In like manner if in review of my  
late ways I find through Grace, my

Soul to have been considerably ta-  
ken up with good thoughts, desires,

or studies, my discourse to have  
brought Glory to God, or edifica-

tion and quickening to my self or



Part. II.

Chap. 5.

1 Cor. 15  
10.

others; my actions commendable and such, which through Christ I hope are acceptable to God, I am to bless God for his preventing and assisting grace, acknowledging with *St. Paul* the whole, even mine own labours and industry to have flown from that Fountain. *By the grace of God, saith he, I am what I am. I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I but the grace of God which is in me.*

2. Forward too I am to look (especially in my morning meditation, and before such times in which any more considerable work or employment awaits me,) and consider (1) what opportunities I may have of doing service to God or good to man, (2) what temptations to any sin my approaching business or company probably will bring with it, and not only in my resolutions to prepare and arm my self accordingly for the embraceing, and with my utmost might doing my duty, and withstanding the sin, but also in my prayers

prayers suitably implore Divine strength and aid. Part. II.  
Chap. 5.

Many such thoughts as these a serious Christian who useth to imploy time to his best advantage, will entertain while he is putting on his clothes in the morning, or outwardly taken up in any like necessary acts. This as to meditation upon my ways.

Secondly, As to my present *Inward state*, the temper of my mind: Let me examine that; whether I find any relentings or meltings of heart for those my wandrings, which I have before viewed, any firmness and resolution for the future against the like: Accordingly I am to apply my self to God in prayer, either for the giving me a due sense of, and remorse for, and resolution and watchfulness against my sin, or for the heightning and strengthening those degrees hereof, which I already have.

Thirdly as to my *Outward state*; Let me consider, how Gods holy  
provi-

providence hath either favoured or crossed my ordinary affairs and designs: for accordingly still I am to address my self unto God in prayer; either by praising him for my successes, or bewailing those sins and omissions which I may judge have blasted them, or otherwise, as my Christian discretion shall suggest.

All which heads of self-examination and Meditation, if, because lying here at some distance, I cannot always readily in my memory run through without confusion or omission, it may be expedient to have them summ'd up into short questions, which I may turn to daily upon occasion, and put each to my soul to be answered unto, upon enquiry made into my own conscience.

1. *What sin committed by* { Thought?  
Word?  
Deed?

2. *What duty omitted as to* { Thought?  
Word?  
Deed?

3. *What*

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3. *What grace or virtue acted in* { Thought? Part. II.  
Word? Chap. 5.  
Deed? }

4. *How hath God dealt with me in his providences, and what in me occasioning such dealings?*

5. *What temper of mind am I now in, considering mine own late carriage, and Gods providences towards me?*

6. *What temptations to sin.* { Am I this  
7. *What opportunities of virtue* { day likely to  
meet with? }

The last head upon which my meditations are to be employed, is my *Prayers*, which I am now about to offer up unto God: in which if I use a set form, I am to consider where those new perticulars of confession, petition or praises which by examination of my self and condition, I have found necessary, must come in; after what sort they may be conveniently expressed, and sometimes

Part. II.  
Chap. 5.

times ( when my condition requires and my time will permit me to be more large or earnest in any part of prayer ) with what arguments I may strengthen my faith and plead with God touching what I desire to speed for ; or again with what circumstances of my sins , or Gods mercies I may heighten my repentance for my sins, or thankfulness for those mercies. If I do not use my self to a set form, then will it be necessary that I more deliberately meditate what I intend to confess, to ask , to praise God for, how I shall so call upon him or conceive of him , as may suit with those main and principal addresses, which I am to make to him. Whether every particular expression, or the just words be forethought, it haply matters not very much : but that some fit significant proper and quickning expressions, for the several parts and substantials of my prayer , be prepared, it is expedient, as well for the greater readiness of the soul in prayer,

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Chap. 5.

Pfal. 3.

prayer, which when it is much to seek in this case, cannot do its duty with attention, nor without disturbance and intermission of due affection, as also that nothing unworthy of the nature of prayer, and the Worship of God may be offered up unto him. And in this point it may be singularly helpful to consider, what of those expressions, promises, narratives, experiences, &c. which I have at any time read in the Word of God, may be useful to me in those my intended addresses to the Throne of Grace. God (as already intimated) loves to hear his own language from us; and so it is, that the very expressions of Scripture have a marvelous affecting power upon the devout heart, beyond those, which seem not to have been alike sanctified by the Holy Ghost using them.

CHAR.

## A Method for

## CHAP. VI.

*Of Prayer, and first of its substance and parts.*

**W**HAT I have read being thus digested by *Meditation*, and by the like meditation, preparation being made for *Prayer*, that now remains as the third and most compleat act of my daily devotion: touching which, besides the precepts already given, others yet remain to be given, when the consideration of the nature of the duty hath a little made way for them.

*Now Prayer is a seeking unto God, and before him representing our Estates and Desires.*

The general nature of prayer is a betaking or addressing our selves to God: and therefore its first act is *Invocation* or calling upon him. **N**ow our condition, who are *dust* and

and *ashes*, and his Majesty being considered, we cannot well be esteemed to seek unto him without adoration or worshiping of him in the beginning of these our addresses; for that in all seeking to Superiors we ever begin with some acknowledgments of their being above us, able to help us, &c. upon which accounts we use ordinarily some testimonies of reverence towards them: But God being infinitely above us, the self-existent and Almighty Fountain of our being, and the most gracious Author and bestower of all comforts, upon whom we daily live, the reverence which we bear, and express to him ought to be advanced to the highest pitch possible. Now *the acting and giving the greatest reverence and honour that we can with soul and body*, do I call *Adoration*. If we therefore put both these together, we have the first part of Prayer, to wit, *An invocatory adoration of God, that is an humble calling upon him,*  
accom-



Part. II.  
Chap. 6.

accompanied with *worshiping and adoring his infinite Majesty*. And this in most compleat prayers extant in Scripture we may observe: particularly in that for ever to be revered pattern, our Lords Prayer, the first sentence contains what we speak of. (*Our Father*: this is a calling upon God. *Which art in Heaven*; these are words besitting one who adores his Majesty. ) So in that prayer of *Hezekiah, Isaiah xxxvij. 16. O Lord of Hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest between the Cherubims; thou art God, even thou alone, &c.* How evidently doth this beginning of his prayer carry in it an *Invocation* of (or calling upon) God, accompanied with the *acknowledgment* and *adoration* of his Deity.

The first part of prayer we gathered out of those words (expressing its general nature) it is a *seeking unto God*. The second we may gather out of them, which follow, it is a *representing our estate before him*.  
Our

Our *estates* naturally are *sinful* and *miserable*. So far forth as we retain any thing of our old nature, so far are sin and misery inseparable adjuncts or attendants unto us. The representing therefore our estates before God is the *confessing our sins*, and *laying open our grievances and wants* before him. A second part of prayer then is *Confession*.

That which all *sinners* should desire is *pardon*: that which all *miserable* persons do naturally desire is *help*. The representing then our desires before God is the *begging mercy and grace to help in time of need*; that is,

1. Pardon of sin.
2. Deliverance from our misery.  
*Internal*, by the sanctification of our hearts, and growth in grace.  
*External* by meet supplies of our outward wants.

A third act of prayer therefore is,  
*Petition or Asking*.

Some-

Part. II.  
Chap. 6.

Some what more yet is considerable in *our states* here below, which though naturally miserable, as aforesaid, yet are by the manifold Grace of God made in several respects *more comfortable by reason* of variety of  *blessings*. Now he that receives a *benefit* ought to have at the least a will and desire of *thankfulness*. He therefore who duly represents his state and desires unto God, lays open also before him those several mercies which at his hands he receives, humbly blessing and praising him the Author of them. The last part of prayer then is *Thanksgiving*.

Now because all these may be done either for our selves or others, therefore is prayer double, or of two sorts.

That which meerly respects our selves.

That which we offer up for others called *Intercession*.

From all this it is evident; that *the first thing, which he, who would learn*

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Part. II.  
Chap. 6.

lean to pray, must take care of, is, that he thoroughly know himself, that is, ( 1 ) Be acquainted with his own state, with his sins, his miseries and wants, inward and outward; otherwise he can never duly represent them unto God. ( 2 ) That he well knew his own desires and resolutions, lest he play the hypocrite with God *asking what he desireth not, or vowing what he intends not.* These are the substantials of prayer.

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CHAP.

Part. II.  
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CHAP.

## A Method for

## CHAP. VI.

*Of the right manner of Prayer.  
First, of its inward manner.  
Some considerations to quicken to sincerity and heartiness in Prayer. What graces are to be exercised in each part of Prayer.*

THE manner of the performing even duty is much looked upon by God. Now prayer being such an immediate act of worship, and it being most just, reasonable, and necessary that we should worship God with the whole man, that is, both with soul and body, in the *manner of prayer* there can be only considerable, its Inward and Outward part.

The *inward* manner of prayer is unquestionably most respected by God:

God: for that according hereunto is the prayer, and the man, sincere or otherwise. And the Consideration hereof should incite us chiefly to care herein. I may pray in as good and as many words, in as devout postures, and, in a word, after as pious a sort, as to what there is outward in prayer, as ever man did, and yet be hypocritical in my prayers. But it is impossible, that I should pray with my *Soul and all that is within me*, and not be cordial, honest and sincere in those prayers which I so make. And therefore as God doth, so, I say, every Christian ought to look chiefly to the inward disposition of his soul in his *Devotions*.

We may note further for our quickening herein, that God not only *requireth* the heart in prayer, but *hath accepted* and often *doth accept* the inward breathings of it, and answer them as fully, as if all other circumstances belonging to the outward manner of prayer had been observed,



Part. II.  
Chap. 7.

1 Sam. i.  
13.

observed. As in the case of *Hannah*; who in that so successful and effectual prayer of hers *spake in her heart only*.

Now prayer is then right as to its inward manner, when there is an hearty exercise of Christian graces and affections suitable to the substance of the prayer, which we offer up to God, (That is to say, to go through the parts of prayer.) *I adore and call upon God as I ought*, when in my calling upon him, I really *believe* that he is, and that he is such that he hath revealed himself to be, and as I now express or conceive him, and therefore *with reverence humbly submit* my self before his Majesty. It is a piece of holy skill worthy taking notice of, which is observable in the prayers of holy men in Scripture. They usually so frame their invocations or callings upon God, as may suit with their main business at the Throne of grace and strengthen their faith for those particular mercies which they ask.

Thus

Thus in that forenamed prayer of *Part. II.*  
*Hezechias's* against the *Assyrian* *Chap. 7.*

*O Lord of Hosts* for he  
 prayed against a mighty host, and  
 for deliverance from it. ) *God of Is-*  
*rael* ( he therefore so calls God ; to  
 put him in mind of his covenant  
 with *Israel*, that he might stretch  
 forth his hands for the deliverance  
 of his own people ) *who dwelt be-*  
*tween the Cherubims* ( that is, who  
 hast here recorded thy name and  
 promised to meet and bless, and  
 from thy mercy seat to answer, thy  
 people. He therefore makes men-  
 tion of Gods promised presence, or  
*dwelling* between the Cherubims,  
 that he might prevail with God to  
 save that City, where his Temple  
 and this his Mercy-Seat was placed.)  
 Every expression in this his invoca-  
 tion hath somewhat in it proper to  
 his suit, and force to strengthen  
 his faith and dependance upon God  
 that he might the more surely pre-  
 vail. In short then the graces to  
 be exercised in *adoration* or *calling*  
 E. upon

Part. II. *upon God chiefly are, Faith, Fear, or*  
 Chap. 7. *Reverence of God, and Humility.*

I then *confess* my self to God as I ought when with *heartly sorrow* and *repentance* ( which it earnest will be accompanied with a kind of *indignation* against my self ) I lay open impartially my sins before him , not sparing the sweetest or closest: and with an *humble sense* of my own vileness, impotency and emptiness acknowledge my wants or his just judgments upon me for any of my sins. So that the chief grace to be exercised peculiarly in confession is *repentance and Godly sorrow*, an humble and tender sense of what we confess , accompanied with *shame* of our selves, and abhorrency of our sins, and if occasion require, justifying God.

*Psal. 51. 4.* Further then I *ask* as I ought when, *as* sensible of mine own unworthiness, out of an *humble trust* in God, through the merits of his Son, ( which trust his gracious promises and declarations of good will through

through him, by his blood, and resolution Part. II.

to, do encourage me to take up

I heartily desire what I ask at his hands : or at least am heartily sorry, if I cannot say I heartily desire all I ask. Now because while I am asking, it so cometh to pass, that I often intermix somewhat of vow, as in asking the pardon of some past sins, many times I engage to diligent and watchful opposition for the future against them, therefore it is necessary that, if I would ask aright, I ask with *resolution and purpose of endeavouring a new life.* And further for that I cannot expect forgiveness from God; except I forgive from my heart my brethren, therefore I must ask in *charity.* So then the graces chiefly to be exercised in Petition are, First, *Faith* or an humble trust and hope in God through *Jesus Christ* that I shall speed (which is most truly *Praying in his name.*) Secondly, *Love* towards God and holiness. Thirdly a steadfast *purpose of obedience*, which is the

Part. II. most consider<sup>ably</sup> <sup>pen-</sup>Fourthly, Charity towards  
 my Bretheren.

Lastly, I then *praise* or give God thanks for his mercies as I ought, when I have an *inward acknowledgment* and *sence* that it is from him alone, and through his meer favour, that I enjoy these mercies, and when, not only I my self do *admire*, but desire that heaven and earth may admire him for his goodness: when also I do all this with a *resolution of improving* the mercy given, that is, of walking as it becometh one, who hath been vouchsafed of such a blessing. So that the graces to be exercised in thanksgiving chiefly are, 1. *Humility*, or a sence of our own unworthiness, and of Gods free mercy and grace; the only fountain of all received or hoped for benefits. 2. *Love*, or an admiration of his goodness accompanied with a desire that he may receive all possible glory for it. 3. *Resolution* and *study* of greater and more *fitable*

## Private Devotion.

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suitable *obedience* and duty to him. Part. II.

These are those graces, in the *Chap. 8.*  
exercise of which, the due inward  
manner of prayer, or a *praying tem-*  
*per*, consists: a composition so ami-  
able, as that it will ever where it is,  
send up an odour of a sweet favour  
unto Heaven, and delight, shall I say,  
or overcome, the Almighty Majesty.

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### CHAP. VIII.

*Of the best outward manner of  
Prayer, in fit postures and fit  
words. Of praying by gift,  
and the inconveniences al-  
ledgable against it. Of praying  
by a form, and the inconveni-  
ences alledgable against it.  
An accommodation and recon-  
cilement of both.*

IN the outward manner of prayer  
the chief points considerable are,  
E 3 the

Part. II. the use of fit *postures* and meet  
 Chap. 8. *words.*

Now though the posture of the body seem to be a small matter, yet methinks my prayers want their due solemnity, if not performed in a posture of worship. True it is, many a devout prayer a man may make riding upon his horse back, walking in the fields, and the like: and right Christian is it thus to sanctifie my necessary journeys, or the time which otherwise would be wholly lost in travel, or stoll away by such recreatory obambulation. But these are occasional, and not my set and solemn devotions. Here my body being otherwise necessarily imployed, the most which I can give to God is my soul: or if to my thoughts my words be added, it is as much as well can be. But in my fixt course of devotion, it is not to be supposed that I worship God (*aliud agens*) imployed with any thing but his worship: and therefore herein let my body, as well as my

## Private Devotion.

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my soul, be taken up in meet acts of worship. Now that I account to be the best posture of worship, which best expresseth an inward reverence of that Majesty, to whom I address my self, who having *fearfully made* my body, and to this day *wonderfully* upheld and *preserved* it, and ( which is infinitely more ) *redeemed* even my very body to immortality, by the body and blood of his Son, hath obliged it, as well as my soul, to all possible homage. And it is to be observed that St. Paul seems to speak ( chiefly if not only ) of private and his daily devotion, when he saith, *I bow my knees to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.* What was his therefore, let it be my practice, as often as I thus pray, to bow my knees: and ( if to no other end, but that I may be sure to mind, that they be holy and *without wrath* ) let me add the *lifting up of hands.* Other postures may be sometimes necessary in our solemn humiliations, or more earnest deprecations of

Part. II.  
Chap. 8.

Ephes. 3.

1 Tim. 2. 8.

E 4.

any



Part. II.  
Chap. 8.

any imminent evil; such as is *Prostration*, or casting my self on the earth before God: to which pious discretion will easily in their season direct.

As to matter of *words* or the forms of prayer, this age hath seen more controvesie, and that in *England* alone, then all ages from the beginning of the world have known all the world over. Touching which matter I say only, that the nature of prayer being as before said, a *seeking unto God by way of adoration, confession, petition, and praise*, if we do this with honest hearts and suitable affections, whether the words in which we utter our selves, be our own or an others; whether they be forethought or sudden, (provided they fitly and reverently express the inward sence of our hearts) it mattereth not, nor is it at all essential unto *Prayer*. For the full essence of *Prayer* is complete, such an address being made inwardly by my soul, and outwardly

ly thus expressed by my tongue and body : and be the words whose they will, my praying them ( that is, offering them up to God ) with an heart suitable to them , hath made them as much mine , as if I had invented, contrived, dictated or pen'd them at the first. I think therefore, if men would, be sober and peaceably minded, this need not make either a stir in the World, or move any scruple to a Christians conscience.

Part. II.  
Chap. 8.

I profess my self no whit guilty of undervaluing the free effusions of the soul before God ( in private especially ) in such expressions as the affected and moved mind suggests, or as the spirit gives utterance. But in my daily private devotions to use perpetually such a loose and arbitrary way , I think hath these inconveniences. *First*, that ( by reason sometimes of the coldness, dulness, and heedlessness of my heart ; other times by reason of distractions, incumbrances, and the like almost unavoidable

Part. II.  
Chap. 8.

avoidable mischiefs ) my devotions will be too often slightly slubbered over, perfunctorily and disorderly performed : Whereas had I a mature and well composed prayer before me ; which I use wholly to offer up to God, all would be much more substantial : And though haply my heart may have been, in these my prayers too too dead ( as it was likely perhaps to have been, had I prayed otherwise , for such or such a season ) yet shall I not prove guilty of such idleness, negligence, and slightness as otherwise I should have been guilty of. And such infirmities, which are incident to us by reason of our present frailty and state, God is likely the more easily to pity and pass by, when he sees that, though we are more indisposed than ordinary , yet are we no whit less diligent. Secondly, another inconvenience thereby may oftentimes be , the omission of many things necessary to be confessed , asked, or returned thanks for ; not so much through

through negligence, dulness, &c. (as before,) as incogitancy and unavoidable forgetfulness. Our ordinary wants and spiritual concerns we may come not to mind, either at all, or as we ought, through much being intent on some other pressing (outward) evils. Common experience will easily satisfy a Christian herein, who is but vers'd in the practice of what we speak of. Have I not many times kneeled down before God with an intention to ask such things which by reason of my earnest asking somewhat else, I have forgotten to ask before I arose? and hath not the reason been the meer following extemporary suggestion? Let it be considered.

Again, on the other side, to use always a certain and constant form of words, seems to have these inconveniences. *First*, that we having almost daily new sins to confess, new wants to beg a supply of; these by such course shall be omitted, or only lightly

Part. II.  
Chap. 8.

Part. II.  
Chap. 8.

lightly and generally toucht, at least not so particularly and affectionately pressed and insisted upon as they ought. 2. Besides sometimes haply I would spend more time in prayer than at another time. Now if my prayers be always the same, I cannot, *except* ( as Papists are reported to do their *Credoe's* and *Ave Maries* ) I should run over and over the same again. 3. Further, frequent use may breed dulness, as some may think.

These being the inconveniencies of both cases, and each case besides having advocates ( or persons that love and plead for them ) even amongst the common people, it will be best to move for an *Accommodation*: And that may be on this wise.

The inconveniencies of the former case may be avoided, by the having a certain good, plain, and full form of prayer, which we well understand, and by usually tying our selves hereto: not so as, 1. to think  
our

our work is done by the prayer being said; for that were to neglect the most necessary part in the manner of prayer, to wit, the inward address and application of the heart to God, contrary to former rule: nor so, 2. as not to alter for this or that time, any expression as God may move our hearts in prayer, or insert any new thing as we have need: but only so, 1. as to ensure my self that my devotions and prayers be sound and compleat, that I offer not to God the *halt and the lame*: and so, 2. as to keep my mind fixt and constant to its business, intent upon all its spiritual concerns.

And again the inconveniences of the latter case will be avoided hereby, that we have not supposed the form upon occasion altogether unalterable, as above said, but rather to have its fit and proper places, wherein we may insert or put in the *confession* of new sins, with their proper aggravations, as also fit places for the adding of any new  
matter

Part. II.  
Chap. 8.

matter of *Petition* or *Thanksgiving*, as there shall be occasion. And to the last inconvenience of this second case, it may be said, that Use cannot beget dulness, if the prayer thus supposed to be framed, be used, according to former precepts, with *Reading* and *Meditation* before it, which exercises will have in a good measure quickened the heart for prayer. And as for such more solemn seasons when we would spend more time with God in prayer, we need not so to tie our selves to these our ordinary devotions; those which at such seasons we intend being already supposed more than ordinary. We may be larger in the confession of sin, more particular in its aggravation, more earnest for such and such mercies as we want, &c. according as we shall see occasion: and either use the groundwork and substance of those our usual prayers, with such amplifications as we shall judge meetest, as for that time, instead of them, use  
such

such other prayers as we shall find best to suit with out temper and occasions; for the preparation of which prayers directions will hereafter be given. Part. II.  
Chap. 9.

In the mean time for better understanding and comprehending the precepts given, as also for the supply of such who may haply be scarce able to frame to themselves such a form, it may not be amiss to subjoyn one for morning, and another for evening, framed according to the former rules.

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## CHAP. IX.

*A Form of Prayer made according to the former accommodation, which may be used in our morning Privacy.*

THE Christian then having read and meditated as before directed.



Part. II.

Chap. 9.

And let him reverently kneel down, lifting up his hands and eyes, but *most surely his heart* to Heaven, and say,

**O** Almighty and most blessed God, Lord of heaven and earth, who makest the out-goings both of morning and evening, and by whose good hand upon me thy creature, I am awaked out of my last nights sleep, and being risen, here present my self before thee: I humbly bow to thee *my* knees, and therewith my heart and soul, and desire with all that is within me to adore thy blessed Majesty.

But most unworthy, and of my self most unsufficient, am I to perform unto thee any  
WOR-

worship or service. What is  
dust and ashes, (and such am I  
if I were innocent) to take  
upon it to speak unto the  
Lord! But I, O God, am a  
guilty wretch, one whom it  
becometh to stand afar off,  
and shame covering my face,  
to cry *Vnclean Vnclean*. My  
soul is naturally over-run with  
lusts as with an universal Le-  
prosie: there is no free part  
of me. My life is as universally  
corrupt as mine heart: My  
child-hood and youth have not  
only been vanity, but sin: I  
have done nothing else therein  
but fulfilled the desires of my  
flesh and mind. My corruptions  
have only grown with me:  
and my sins since become so  
much the more sinful, by how  
much the more knowledge I  
have

Part. II.

Chap. 9.

Part. II. have had of thy will, and  
 Chap. 9. strength and engagements to  
 have performed it.

*2 Of actual  
 sins.* To this very day, as indeed  
 I ever have done, I daily break  
 thy holy Laws in thought,  
 word and actions, by choosing

*\* Here confess a-  
 ny particular or  
 fresh sin commit-  
 ted, or duty negle-  
 cted, which in thy  
 examination of  
 thy self thou hast  
 found.*

*Remember in  
 the use of these or  
 any such words to  
 reflect in thy  
 thoughts upon any  
 particulars which  
 thy conscience tells  
 thee, they may fit-  
 ly represent to God  
 touching thee.*

what thou hast for-  
 bidden, and neglect-  
 ing what thou hast  
 commanded. \*\*\*. In  
 all my ways I most  
 miserably transgress.  
 My very † sleep it self,  
 O Lord, is not inno-  
 cent. Nor is it thus  
 only in the common  
 and more ordinary a-  
 ctions of my life.  
 Those few good deeds  
 which I do, have ma-  
 ny, not only † infir-  
 mities, but sins in  
 them :

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them: and I have need to re-  
pent of my very righteousness  
[ of my †\*\*\*. ] I therefore so  
desire to do: and am here  
come before thee, as thou hast  
comanded me, to confess my  
sin unto thee, with hopes, ac-  
cording to thy promise, that I  
shall find mercy, I have, O  
God, confessed to thee, as I am  
able.

Part. II.  
Chap. 9.

Now Mercy, Mercy, let me  
find with thee, through Christ  
Jesus my Saviour. Remember  
that attonement, which he  
made by the Blood of his  
Cross: In those streams  
thoroughly wash away my filth:  
By those Wounds let me be  
healed; and by his Death let  
me attain a blessed  
immortality, ( \* \* )  
And send down thine

*Petition.*  
*1 For our  
selves*

*\* Particularly let  
me obtain the par-  
don of \*  
holy*

Part. II.  
Chap. 9.

holy Spirit abundantly into mine heart, which may renew me throughout according to thine Image, healing all the naughty inclinations of my soul, and begetting in me an hearty love unto holiness, and a constant fear of thee my God, that I may have respect unto all thy Commandments, and walk before thee all my days with a perfect heart. Quicken me also by the same thy good Spirit to give all diligence in every duty ( *and especially in \* \** ) that I may grow in grace, and in thy favour, and daily come nearer unto salvation and thee. And forasmuch as I my self am unstable as water, preserve me by thy power through Faith, that I fall not from my integrity,

tye, nor depart wickedly from thee my God. Especially keep thy servant from his iniquity, Part. II.  
Chap. 9.

(or his iniquities of \* \* \*) and

make me me most watchful a-

gainst all those \* oc-

casions and wiles of

sin, by which I have

been formerly insna-

red. My outward con-

dition, during all the

days of my pilgrimage

here on earth, do

thou order to thy glory and

my own good: and, if it may

be thy holy Will, grant that

it may be so far quiet and pro-

sperious, as that I may serve

thee chearfully and without di-

straction.

\* Here thou mayst have many private and proper reflections: and so generally where-soever the same mark is set.

Be gracious also, O Lord, <sup>2 For o-</sup>  
unto thine holy Church, and <sup>thers.</sup>  
to this Church, especially.

Watch

Part. II.  
Chap. 9.

*Remember particular reflections and, if need, mentions.*

Watch over us daily for good: and be pleased to bless and preserve the Kings Maiesty, his Queen, and all the Royal Family. Grant that all Magistrates may be faithful both to thee and to their Prince and Country in their trust: and that all Ministers of what degree soever, may be sober, watchful, fervent and successful in thy work. Let the whole Nation, and especially this neighbourhood grow in the true knowledge and fear of thee. Visit with thy grace † and blessing all my † Relations, my † Friends and † Benefactors. Forgive and reconcile both to thy self and me all mine † enemies. Comfort, relieve, and in thine own good time deliver all thy servants † who

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† who are in any distress in- Part. II.  
Chap. 9.  
ward or outward, and sanctifie  
both to them and me all thy  
dealings, causing all things in  
the end to work together for  
good, according to thy infi-  
nite Power and Wisdom,  
whereby thou over-rulest all  
events.

For which thy gracious *Thanks-*  
administration of the whole *giving.*  
course of Nature, and the mul-  
titude of blessings appertain-  
ing both to this life and that  
which is to come, which thy  
providence incessantly heaps  
upon all mankind, and parti-  
cularly upon me thy most un-  
deserving servant, for ever  
blessed be thy holy Name. E-  
specially may Heaven and  
Earth ever praise thee, for the  
redemption of the world by  
thy



Part. II.  
Chap. 9.

thy Son; and the knowledge of thee; through him, revealed in thy Word; and the mighty workings of thy Spirit thereby. And be thou pleased to accept of that praise which thy servant hereby returns thee (as great as he can) for them all and particularly, for this last nights refreshings, together with the comfortable restoring him to the enjoyment of day. Grant me thy special Grace, that I may spend my time to thy Glory, and may be all the day long in thy fear. Keep me that I fall into no sin, nor run into any danger. And accept thou this my morning service, and together me, who here devote myself to thee, through my Saviour Christ Jesus, in whose  
Name

Name I further pray, as by Part. II.  
Chap. 10. him taught, when I pray, to say,

*Our Father, &c.*

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CHAP. X.

*A form of Prayer, made as the other, which may be used in our evening Privacy.*

IN like manner the Christian having entred his *Closet* with some such ejaculatory or short prayer, as before directed to, and having read and meditated as in the morning, may, I presume, very profitably, use, with such alteration, as his condition shall require, and his discretion direct, the ensuing Prayer.

O Most Holy and Gracious Father, and searcher  
F of

Part. II.  
Chap. 10.

of all hearts ; who seest my down-lying as well as up rising, darkness and light being both alike to thee ; who art near unto all my ways , and espiest my thoughts while they are yet afar off. I have here set my self before thee to pay my evening homage , and desire to present both my soul and body ( as is most due ) a living Sacrifice to thee my God , who hast made and redeemed both.

*Confession*  
*I. Of habitual corruption.*

But most unfit, O Lord, are they to be to thee presented, every part of both being naturally corrupt and abominable, and nothing in me free from the loathsom defilement of sin. My soul by nature is desperately wicked, and all its powers perverse and bent upon evil.

My

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Chap. 10.

My mind alinated from thee through the ignorance that is within me: My affections unruly and masterless: My will full of enmity to thy Law, and enslaved to the service of divers lusts and pleasures. And as to my body, in iniquity, O Lord, was I shapen, and in sin did my Mother conceive me: And ever since, have all my members been servants unto iniquity and instruments of wickedness. With my whole man have I obeyed the Law of sin, and fulfilled the desires of my flesh and corrupt mind. I scarce can think of that sin, in which I have not had my hands one part of my time or other. In sin, O God, have I spent not only my vainer age and the days of my ignorance,

F 2

but

2. Of habitual sin.

Part. II.

Chap. 10.

but my ripeſt years, and thoſe of full'eſt diſcretion, which I have yet attain'd to: ſince the light of the Goſpel hath ſhone into my opened eyes, ſince thou haſt touch'd my heart with a ſenſe of that evil, which there is in ſin, ſo wicked and perverſe a ſervant have I been, that knowing my Lords will I have both neglected to do accordingly, and preſumptuouſly done contrary unto it. To the very preſent time, O Lord, how † frequently, and how † ſadly do I backſlide? What † liberty do I allow my ſelf? How † heedleſs do I converse? I walk at a meer per-adventure with thee my God. Notwithſtanding all my vows and promiſes of watchfulneſs unto obedience, this very day  
how

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how little hath thy fear been Part. II.  
Chap. 10.  
in my heart! and from hence  
comes it to pass that I have so

miserably departed  
from thee ( by \*\*\*. )

With what stripes  
therefore do I de-  
serve to be beaten!

And, how righteous  
a quarrel against me  
hath not only thy  
Justice but thy very

Grace and Mercy.

*\* Here confess  
any of the mis-  
carriages of the  
day, which thou  
hast been supposed  
to have taken no-  
tice of in thy me-  
ditation.*

Notwithstanding, O Blessed Petition.  
Father, give thy poor creature 1. For our  
selves.  
leave to beseech, and let him  
prevail with thee, not to take  
that advantage against him  
which justly thou mayst :  
Rather, now thou hast born  
so long, break my heart by this  
thy goodness, and make thy  
forbearance and long suffer-

F 3

ing

Part. II.

Chap. 10.

ing to lead me to repentance. Vouchsafe unto me thy sanctifying Spirit : Let it fill me with an holy shame of my former ways : And let the sense of my own unworthiness towards thee beget in me an holy indignation against my self, a passionate and constant zeal by future diligence, as far as is possible to redeem and repair some of my lost and most sadly mis-spent time. Let my heart be never void of a steadfast purpose of serving thee in the impartial performance of every known duty, ( especially of ( \* \* \* ) and careful avoidance of every sin. ( \* ) And having thus given to will, do thou of the same thy good pleasure

\* Here put in any thing for which thou findest occasion.

sure give also to do, following the preventions of thy Grace by the continual assistances thereof, so that I may proceed from one virtue unto another, perfecting holiness in thy fear, and keeping a conscience void of offence towards thee and all men.

And this my cordial purpose, and perseverance in endeavours of pleasing thee, do thou through the blood of my Saviour graciously accept, laying not to my charge any of my former sins, nor visiting upon me, either the neglects, or transgressions of my duty. At least however thou shalt here deal with thy servant, in the last day acquit him of all guilt, and through the merits of thy Son, let him obtain remission



Part. II.  
Chap. 10.

mission of his sin, and an inheritance in thine everlasting Kingdom. In the mean while, as to the necessities of this present life, give thy servant what thou pleasest, and what thou seeest best for him, even food convenient. Thou needest not, O God, my service, but accept my ambition of being serviceable unto thee, and bless me both with strength and opportunities for it, and, if it may be thy holy will, with success therein.

2. For  
others.

Father, I pray unto thee also for all men (forasmuch as thou art a God who wouldst have all to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of thy truth) especially for all and every member and members of thy Universal Church,  
and

and for the particular Church  
or this the Land of my nati-  
vity: For the Kings Majesty, the  
Queen and the whole Royal  
Family, for all that are in au-  
thority, for the several Stew-  
ards of thy Mysteries the Mi-  
nisters of thy Gospel (for him  
in particular to whose over-  
sight thou hast committed me)  
that thou wilt give unto them  
all, according to thy most gra-  
cious pleasure, the blessings  
both of this life and that  
which is to come, especially  
such measures of thy Spirit,  
that every shoulder may lye  
fitted for its burthen, and all a-  
mongst us may faithfully serve  
thee, according to their sever-  
al degrees; so that this whole  
Land may be blessed with a-  
bundance of prosperity and

Part. II.  
Chap. 10.

peace, so long as the Sun and Moon endureth. Forget not peculiarly to shew mercy unto the † relations, † friends, † helpers, † and well-wishers of thy servant, Reward, I beseech thee, all their love; and † forgive, good Lord, divert, and put an end unto all others malice or enmity. Let thine eyes be ever open upon, and the bowels of thy compassion be moved towards, all thy wanting and suffering servants: Support them under, and graciously deliver them out of all their distresses, and let the end be peace, and righteousness, and blessedness for ever.

*Thanks-  
giving.*

Thy servant will speak yet once more, and praise thee for thine infinite love and compassion to that miserable nature,

ture, of which he is a partaker, in revealing to us, when we had all lost or corrupted it, the knowledge of thy self, both by the light of Nature, and most clearly by thy holy Word; in sending thy Son for our redemption, in appointing the Ministry and Ordinances of thy Gospel, and pouring out thy holy Spirit to turn us from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto the kingdom of thy Son. O God, I particularly bless thee, for the knowledge which I have of thee in my Saviour Christ Jesus; for my share in him; for any measure of thy Grace on me vouchsafed; for the comfortable hope which through thy Sons blood I have of pardon and eternal life; for  
this

Part. II.  
Chap. 10.

this days life and protection,  
for † the with-holding, ( or re-  
moving ) those several judge-

\* Here praise  
God for any par-  
ticular deliver-  
ance , saying ,  
( especially for  
\*\* )

ments which my sins  
deserve, ( \*\*\* ) for  
the loading me with  
a multitude of most  
undeserved blessings  
( especially for \*\*\* )

Encrease upon me

*Petition-  
ary con-  
clusion.*

thy Grace evermore ; and  
make me thankful by proving  
a faithful Steward of all thy  
mercies. Let that Eye of  
thine which never slumbreth  
nor sleepeth, which hath been  
open upon me this day, watch  
over me this night : Let no-  
thing disturb or make me a-  
fraid. Let none of the sins of  
the day lye down with me, nor  
ever appear against me.  
Vouchsafe my body due re-  
fresh-

freshment, and let my soul have her songs in the night. Keep both from all works of darkness: and let me be ever with thee, O Father, both here and hereafter, through thy Son my Saviour Christ Jesus, in whose name and words I further pray.

*Our Father, &c.*

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CHAP. XI.

*Some further Directions touching the use of these Prayers. Objections of want of time, or want of privacy considered.*

**I**N these or the like words may a devout Christian, I presume, not unfitly pour out his heart before God, morning and evening. But it is to be remembred to what end these

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Chap. II.

these forms were prepared, and the use of them directed to, to wit, to be a provision against raw, heedless, imperfect, broken, confused, and disorderly Prayers: of which dulness, distemper, or distraction may make even the devoutest Christian to be guilty, if he always trust to his extemporary faculty and readiness.

Wherefore it is not the intention of the present direction, to tie even every one that shall use these or the like forms ever to them, but only commonly, or as his Christian prudence and sobriety shall judge it best suiting with his devotion and present temper: So then, if at any time a Christian shall find his mind more ready and present than ordinary, so that he can say in Holy

Psal. 108. *Dauids words, My heart is fixed, (or, prepared) O Lord, my heart is fixed, and he feel a certain overflowing of affection ready to come over his soul, he is to esteem this a time, when God doth as it were bespeak somewhat more than ordinary,*

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Part. II.  
Chap. II.

nary, to that purpose offering, and giving him to feel already, more than ordinary assistance; and by such special moving of the waters secretly signifie, that he hath some healing benefit or refreshment then to communicate unto the soul. Wherefore let him yield himself to the leading of the Spirit, and by no means let slip that holy season of a more free and large effusion or pouring out his soul before God: Always in the mean while remembering that he duly prepare himself, by some fore-going meditation, according to what hath been already in part spoken, and will hereafter be more fully considered.

And this practice, I presume, as it so far binds a man up, that his devotion should not be loose and slighty, so it allows him ( 1. ) such liberty as may duly exercise and improve any spiritual gifts which he conceives himself to have, and ( 2. ) such variety as that there is no fear, that custome or treading always the same



Part. II.  
Chap. 11.

some tract, (I mean repeating the same words) should make him guilty of formality and deadness.

If there be any Objection now lying against this proposed course in our devotion, it is, as far as I can see, one of these two, either ( 1. ) that it will take up too much time, or ( 2. ) That those who for the general can use it, yet at all times cannot find opportunity for it, as of privacy when abroad, &c.

But as to the first case objected, we have already supposed our practist to be such, who lives somewhat above a servile life, and therefore may spare some part of his time, which surely he cannot spend to a better purpose, or upon more beneficial employment. And it will undoubtedly be found true by him, who shall set himself upon this practice, or put his devotions into this mold, that when he is once but got into the way, and settled in it, the performance of all will cost him less time by much in a day, than hath

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hath the reading of these directions. Part. II.

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An hour in a day (or very little more) being divided into equal parts, and half taken in the morning, half at night, may very well suffice: and they are either very full of employment, or exceeding bad husbands of their time, who, being at their own command, cannot afford so much time for so necessary a work. (Nor to speak that some part of this work may be reckoned a kind of studying, and that as becoming, as useful to all such as we speak to.) Consider, man, which is of greater concernment, thy souls, or thy bodies welfare? Which is longer, threescore years and ten, or *Eternity*? Canst thou therefore only find time to provide for the more unworthy?

The latter opposition of want of privacy, when abroad, is more or less considerable according to the accommodation and entertainment we meet with abroad, which sometimes is such that it gives us no less oppor-

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Chap. II.

opportunities of privacy than we have at home. Then, as to the utensils of our devotion, A Bible is easily got in the house; a Note-book in my pocket (out of which when I come home I may transcribe into my *Memorial* or *Accomptal* any thing which I judge fit) is no great burden: no more is my prayer-book if occasion be. So that in this case my devotions may be compleat.

☛ But suppose I be cast into a chamber amongst company, and those such whom I like not much for overlookers of my devotion: In this case, supposing my company to be persons who will either scorn me and my Religion, or disturb me, it is better my devotions be less compleat, and private than more full and open. Now totally hindred of privacy I cannot be. I can pretend (and that without a lye) little common necessary business which may call me out while I can enquire into my self, and pour out a short prayer to God walking or otherwise. And  
God

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God no doubt will accept my devo-  
tions when as perfect as I can, al-  
though not as I would.

Part. II.  
Chap. II.

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PART

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## PART III.

Of more solemn Retirement into the Closet upon *Holy-days* and *Sundays*.

## CHAP. I.

*That private devotions should be greater on Holy-days, than on ordinary days. The end of Festivals, and their Vindication from abuse and Cavils.*

**T**hat upon Holy-days or Festivals, they ought to be more taken

taken up in devotion, than on other daies, there is no men I presume will deny, except they be so factious as to slight the Institution, or so sensual as not to understand the end and desire of them.

Part. III.  
Chap. 1.

It is as uncharitable as unreasonable a Part to conclude, because they bear the name ordinarily of certain Saints and Martyrs, that therefore the days were superstitiously consecrated to the meer honour of those Saints. The design of the Church in this Institution seems to me only thus much.

*First*, That Almighty God might have particular glory for all the particular parts and degrees of the work of our redemption (the *Incarnation*, *Circumcision*, *Passion*, *Resurrection* &c. of our Saviour) as likewise for all those his servants by whose doctrine and examples, whether in life or death, his holy Gospel hath been planted and confirmed. Then  
2. that there might be due commemoration of such particular persons,  
and

Part. III.  
Chap. I.

and of the graces in which they did excel; as well to the end, that their examples (at least) might be an immortal incitement to vertue, and they being dead might yet thus speak; as that vertue might have its deserved honour, which for the enforcement of like worthy practices upon others, comes not at all too late, though it be given to the ashes of the vertuous.

And that these two, to wit, giving *particular honour to God*, and the *propagation of vertue*, were the *main aims* of the Church, seems to be undeniable, if we do consider either the particular Collects on those daies, or that clause in the Prayer for the *Estate of Christs Church Militant*, towards the end, (*We bless thy name for all thy servants departed this life in thy faith and fear, beseeching thee to give us grace to follow their good examples, &c.*) which prayer, we know, is one part of the Service of the Church upon every Festival, and both this  
and

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and the forementioned Collects expressly profess as much as we affirm. Part. III.  
Chap. I.

Now these as they cannot be rejected by any sober men ( and so the end being right, and the power just, and the thing it self as just ( which two last, because I see no reason for the questioning them, I let pass without any other proof, than the evidence which they carry with them ) it cannot be seen how the institution should be amiss, wherefore the factious have an answer: ) so they are directly frustrated by those, who look upon Festivals as meerly a time of liberty, and so many days devoted to pleasure or idleness. I will not say, but that both the Church and State, in settling these Institutions by Law, might have some aim at allowing servants, and those who live a servile life, some rest and time for lawful recreations, which sometimes the covetousness of some Masters, sometimes some persons own covetousness



Part. III.  
Chap. I.

Cod : de  
Feriis.

ness would not allow them: ( And this is justifiable even by the practice of God himself in the fourth Commandment, *that thy servant may rest, &c.* ) but that it was never either the Churches or States intention, that they should wholly be spent to this purpose I do affirm: and for proof hereof, *at home*, alledge our Laws, which enjoyn all on such days to resort to places of publick worship for the service of God, and *abroad*, the Imperial Constitution, *We will not that Holy-days, which are consecrate to the supream Majesty be imployed or spent upon pleasures.* And it would be a right pious work, and as much for the vindication of Festivals as any other, If Magistrates would, according as I am sure they may, punish those, who use to spend whole Holy-days in their pleasures ( dancing, hunting, runnings, foot-bals, &c. ) by the legal mulct for absence from Divine service.

But may no recreation then be taken

taken upon Holy-days? I do not say, nor intend that: nor doth, I presume, the Law neither new, or old. But the rest and ( if by the rest we will understand any thing but a dull idleness ) the refreshment of labouring persons, being one thing which, by the way, was designed in their Institution, plain it is that lawful recreations, as they are exercises of refreshment, may on them be used. But as to such recreations, which shall supplant or thrust out the service of God, which is the main end to which the Festivals were ordained, I see not how they can without sin be frequented, practised, or tollerated: I am sure our Ecclesiastical Laws, tollerate them not.

Further I presume the sence which the fourth Commandment in common equity bears, enforceth as much as I press: For that enjoinning a Jew to sanctifie the seventh day, that is the time which by their Law was set apart to the worship of God, will also (at least)

G

least)

Part. III. least) in equity and reason enjoyn a  
 Chap. 3. Christian to sanctifie such times, as  
 their Laws have consecrated to the  
 Divine worship: which Laws touch-  
 ing the particular setting apart of  
 times to the worship of God, though  
 they are not all extant in Scripture,  
 nor immediatly delivered by the  
 mouth of God; yet being made by  
 them, whom he, to whom *all power*  
*both in Heaven and Earth was given,*  
 hath commissioned and made his  
 delegates (to wit, his Apostles, and  
 their successors, the governours of the  
 Church) cannot be looked upon as  
 altogether humane, but have a cer-  
 tain stamp of Divinity; according  
 as ordinarily we interpret the com-  
 mands of the Kings officers, in such  
 things wherein they are commissio-  
 nated, to be the Kings commands.  
 Now, that Holy-days were ordain-  
 ed by the lawful governours of the  
 Church, is too evident to be denied.  
 And, I should not fear to say, that  
 some of our present Feasts were at  
 the least observed by some of the  
 Apostles,

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Apostles, our Saviours immediate Part. III.  
Substitutes. How therefore can we Chap. 3.  
neglect to sanctifie such times, which  
are thus consecrated to God, that is  
not imploy them to those separate  
uses; to which they were appointed  
( which is the meaning of sanctify-  
ing in this regard, in Scripture )  
without the unhallowing *holy* or *de-*  
*voted* things, or without the evident  
breach of this Commandment.

I will add no more to this pur-  
pose, but that every one being  
bound to proportion his time for his  
devotion, according to the oppor-  
tunities and leisure which he hath,  
and it being unlawful by the very  
municipal law, or law of the Land  
( for such is the Ecclesiastical law in  
this case ) totally to follow the work  
of my calling on Festivals or Holy-  
days, I cannot but have more lei- *Ab. 20. 16.*  
sure on them for the service of God; *Vid. Euseb*  
and therefore consequently a great- *Ecc. Hist.*  
er portion of it is to be spent in my *lib. 5. cap.*  
devotions. Which being concluded *22, 23, &*  
as most lawful and rightfully it *de vita*  
*Const. l. 3.*  
*c. 17.*

G 2

may

Part. III.  
Chap. 2.

may in general, what hath been said holds as well concerning private as publick devotions. I ought therefore to think my self bound on every Holy-day to somewhat more of devotion in private, than what every day calls for.

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## CHAP. II.

*What there should be of new in our private devotions upon Holy-days.*

**T**HE question now will be, what that is of new, which Festivals may seem properly to require of a Christian in his Closet-devotions.

To which it must be said, that as to the general substance of my devotions, it can scarce be other at any time, than what hath been already delivered, to wit, *Reading, Meditation and Prayer*. But yet each of these may be employed a while

while upon some new speciality, or particular matter which that days occasion and solemnity directs unto: to wit, upon the life or virtues of that particular Saint or Martyr, whose memory the day celebrates: or if the day be such which was intended only to praise God for some particular transaction relating to our redemption (as the *Nativity* of our Lord, his *Circumcision &c.*) to bend my devotions hitherward. To this purpose it may be proper, besides what I read in Holy Scripture that day by my constant course, (which should not at any time except upon evident necessity, or very considerable business be broken) to read those particular portions of Scripture which are by the Church appointed for that day; I mean the *Epistle* and *Gospel* for the day. And these being read over with such care as is before prescribed, to spend some time according to the former rules in Meditation upon them: and then, either to my own prayers to

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take in the Collect of the day, or to add some other petitions and praises, as my Christian discretion shall judge seasonable. To this employment if I allot an hour (or if need so require half an hour) besides what I ordinarily, on other days, spend on my devotions, the work may in some good measure be done. And it cannot be thought but so much time may well be spared by reason of that leisure and rest which the Law on that day enjoins me.

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### CHAP. III.

*An Exemplification or practice of the former rules in Christmas day, with a fit Prayer to be added to my ordinary Prayers upon that day.*

**N**OW because all the directions given will be better understood

stood, and rendered more easily practicable to the plainest, if a little exemplified, a pattern or two shall be set down of what there should be of new in our devotions on Festivals and those so framed, as that they may serve not only for instances in this last case, but for examples of practice to those formerly given rules, touching *Reading* and *Meditating*.

Part. III.  
Chap. 3.

Part II.  
Chap. 4.  
& 5.

And first for such Feasts which celebrate the memory of some particular in, or step to, our redemption.

Amongst these the copy shall be in *Christmas days*. ( The Epistle *Hebr.* 1. ver. 1. to ver. 13. ) Which having carefully read over, I cannot but observe ( according to my first rule in Meditation ) that the holy Ghosts design is to express the glory of our Saviour, and especially his eminence above any, and all the Angels ( which yet are the most glorious part of the Creation. ) And this glory of his is expressed to be so

Part II.  
Chap. 5.

G. 4                      eminent,



Part. III.

Chap. 3.

eminent, not only in respect of his Divine nature, as he is the express Image of his Fathers person, but also as he is God-man, as having been born in our nature, *and purged our sins, he sate down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.* So that the very humane nature of our Saviour, how ever contemptible it might seem once to be, is now advanced infinitely above the *Angels, all the Angels being to worship* The incarnate Son of God, *And his Throne being established for ever.*

Now there being in all this no considerable matter of difficulty which offers it self, I have no need here to apply my second rules (touching searching into difficulties) and therefore I proceed to the third, to consider what I am the better for having read this. The substance of it I have already gathered in the practice of my first rule: that reviewing to gain light to the particular parts, I find by the second verse my self instructed and confirmed

ed in that point of my faith, the Eternity of the Second Person, or the Sons being from everlasting: For it is said *that God by his Son made the Worlds*, that is (as I may probably conclude) all things that are. His Son then was before the *Worlds*, that is, from Eternity.

Again that admirable expression (*the brightness of the fathers glory, and express image of his person and the upholder of all things by his power*) what a glorious representation is it of the Sons Deity, and being distinct but not separate from his eternal father; according as the brightness of glory may be conceived as distinct from that glory, of which it is the brightness, but never can be apart from that glory.

Again that following expression (*after he had by himself purged our sins, Sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high*) with what an heavenly emphasis doth it set out,

1. The fulness of the atonement

made by Christ as to every faithful person: by himself he purged our sins: and how can they not be pure before the Father, whose sins his only Son by himself hath purged?

1. The transcendency of our Saviours glorification (*He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high*) What a blessed (*ΕΙΣ* or) *beight* is here to express it! and how doth the very expression affect the considering mind! *he set down at the right*, &c. methinks I could say it an hundred times over with new admiration and dissolution of soul. It secretly intinuates also, what shall be our future glory, when we shall be like unto him, and *sit down with him at the right hand of the same Majesty*. More of the same nature might be noted, but this is sufficient to exemplifie the Rules.

I proceed now to consider the Gospel which also I am supposed to have read. (Gospel, *John* 1. ver. 1. to 15.) The scope and substance of this Gospel seems to be this, that  
 OUR

our Lord Jesus being God ever Part. III.  
with the Father, in time took upon Chap. 3.  
him our nature to redeem us, and  
that *John the Baptist* was a witness  
hereof.

But here are several expressions,  
which seem to contain some matter  
of faith touching our Saviour, and  
yet I do not perfectly understand  
them. Wherefore if I have any  
help (as before directed to, by the  
second Rule touching Meditation  
upon Scripture) I consult that touch-  
ing this whole portion of Scrip-  
ture. Which having consulted I  
may be supposed in some tolerable  
measure to understand what is held  
forth therein necessary to be belie-  
ved. If I have no such book or help  
then I must make as good shift as I  
can: and considering the scope and  
drift of the place before mentioned,  
and every particular expression  
at which I stick, I interpret that  
which I doubt of, with a regard to,  
and by the light I can take from,  
what I understand. Thus having  
the

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the general scope of this Scripture in my mind, I review it, or consider it again in the order as it lies. Nothing do I meet with which I do not in a good measure understand till I come to ver. 4. & 5. (For having observed at the first reading, that (ver. 14.) the Apostle saith the *Word was made flesh*, by the *Word* in the 1. verse I can understand nothing but the eternal Son of God) In *him was life, and the life was the light of men*. What life? or how is the life the light of men? I consider that the holy Ghost is here speaking of the Deity of the Son, and in the third verse ascribes the making of all things to him. Then it follows *In him was life*. It is very likely that the meaning hereof is thus much. *He is the fountain of life*, he made as well the things which live, as those which do not. He communicated life to all living. *And the life was the light of men*, It is very likely, that life is here to be understood of that natural life, which all men

men whatsoever live : for he speaks of Christ as the Creator of all living. Now, whereas it is said, that *this life is the light of men*, or that that life, which men do partake of from God, is light ; haply the meaning hereof may be, that the life which the Creator gave to man, was a more lightsom (that is, a more intelligent) life than what the rest of living creatures here below partake of ; to wit, a Rational life. Now it follows, *The light shined in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not.* It is very likely that by *light* I must understand in this verse, what I did thereby in the former, to wit, Reason, and so considering all more attently, at length I guess, that some such thing as this is the import of that verse.

The natural light of mans reason shone in his corrupt and sensual nature, but that nature followed not the dictates of it : Men rejected what their reason would have guided them] to choose. And this, being that

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that I was lead thereto by considering the drift of the words, and find now that the words will, to my best judgment, very well bear, I conceive may probably be the meaning of this place.

But here it may be very necessary to admonish, especially ordinary people, that they proceed not too far upon their own judgments in interpreting darker places of Scripture, of which this haply may seem one. We have only in what we have said shewn the best way, which can be taken for the finding out the sence of Scripture. But if so be, that using this method I particularly could not have found out so much touching the sence of this Scripture, as hath been above declared, yet had not either my reading or my meditation been fruitless I could very well and very profitably have rested in this, that I observed these verses to testify to me, that Christ is God, and by him all things were made; and that from him came life, and all the light, which in life  
men

men have. And thus much, by Part. III.  
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observation; a plain person might have found from hence. But usually, I say, plain persons will do best, not to trust the strength of their own reason, which commonly is none of the best judge of consequences and dependances, but rather get to themselves such helps as above directed to, and follow their wholesom guidance.

Well: having found out as I conceive thus much of the meaning of this Scripture, if there be any thing else I doubt of in that part of it which remains I proceed to consider it, carrying still in my mind the scope of the whole, and thus much as I have learnt of the sense of the former part. The substance of the remaining part seems to me thus much, That when it pleased the *Word to be made flesh* (that is, the Son of God to take upon him our nature; and in that nature to dwell) *John the Baptist* was sent for a witness to testify, that this was the *true light*



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Chap. 3.

*light*, to the end that *men might* believe: And to as many of mankind as did believe upon, and receive this light, this light ( himself being the eternal and natural Son of God ) gave the priviledge, right or power to become through him the Sons of God, being now born unto a new(*viz.*a godly) life by their receiving him. Now here it may be ( as I look through the particular verses ) are one or two things more of moment which I doubt of, and touching which I will consult the best helps I have, or, otherwise consider with as much attention and modesty as I can.

First, In what sence should Christ be termed the *true light*?

This considering of, I remember that before, there was mention of a certain *light* which all men did partake from the *Word* as created by him ( to wit, their Reason ) and this light, though it shone in them, yet, as the first man did not follow its shine, so the rest did reject its guidance

dance, and the *darkness* received, or *Part. III.*  
*comprehended it not.* But now it is *Chap. 3.*  
 said, *that the Word*, that is, *Christ*  
*made flesh*, is the *true light*: both  
 which considering together, the im-  
 port of all seems to be this, That  
 whereas the natural light of reason,  
 being not comprehended but rather  
 overcome ( by the darkness of mans  
 corrupt nature, was insufficient, of  
 it self, to lead man unto his salvation  
 or true happiness, and, being so-  
 phisticated by the same corruption,  
 had led him to seek happiness in  
 many false and by paths, Jesus Christ  
 came into the world to bring to  
 light the true way to happiness, and  
 so was the *true light*.

From whence also I begin to see  
 somewhat into the second passage  
 which I doubted of, to wit, what  
 should be the meaning of that [*as*  
*many as received him*] For, consider-  
 ing how the Evangelist in the ver-  
 ses immediately foregoing speaks of  
 Christ, to wit, as the *true light*, I  
 easily see, that to receive him is to  
 imbrace

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imbrace him as the light, and so to apply my self to those holy ways which he hath discovered, alone to lead unto happiness. Which also the following words further intimate [*them that believe in his name*] that is them who by their imbracing the discovery which he hath made, and doing accordingly, do manifest that they are perswaded he is the true light: which thing they do, not as they are born by *the will of man*, of flesh and blood (for the *darkness comprehendeth not the light*) but as begotten, or created over again by God hereto.

So then, now I conceive I understand the *Gospel for this day*, and all the most concerning particulars in it. The substance of it therefore I recollect after this my search, to the end it may sink the deeper into me, and I be the better versed hereafter in this Scripture. And that is this, That Christ being eternally God, was also together with God (with whom he ever was) the Creator of all things,  
and

and particularly of man ; that man in his recreation received a certain light ( *viz.* his reason ) which he opposed and overcame, rather than followed ; that therefore it pleased Christ to be made man, and coming into the world, to discover the true way to happiness unto degenerate man ; and as many of mankind, who embraced this discovery, and manifested their belief of Christs being the *true light*, by their receiving him as such, he restored into the blessed state of being the Sons of God ( as *Adam* was before his fall. ) And of all this *John the Baptist* was sent before to be a witness, that by his testimony men might be prepared to believe in this *true light*.

Thus much then I am improved in point of knowledge. But is there nothing which may be further useful to me as to practicals ? No promise of mercy ? No threat of punishment to any ? Nothing to quicken me to any duty ? There is surely.

First,

First, that is a remarkable expression, *As many as received him, to them he gave power to become the Sons of God.* I cannot expect ever to be by my incarnate Lord, made a Son of God, and Heir with him in the Kingdom of his Father, except I receive him as the *true light*, except I look for happiness by the method by him delivered, a holy Christian practice, according to his Gospel. I see therefore hence the necessity of being conformable to all the Commands of the Gospel. He is salvation to none to whom he is not light, If therefore I am not faithful, meek, charitable, holy, &c. as the Gospel directs, salvation it self will not save me.

Further, both the Epistle and Gospel put me in mind of, what the day celebrates, the Incarnation of our Saviour (at least his visible Incarnation, for to the eye he was not Incarnate till born.) *The Word was made flesh*, and so himself spake unto us, *and by himself he*  
*purged*

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*purged our sins. The World, who* Part. III.  
*was that? The Son of God, the* Chap. 3.  
*brightness of his Fathers glory, the*  
*express Image of his person, he who*  
*was ever with God and ever God, heir*  
*of all things, by whom all things were*  
*made, he was made flesh. O the depth*  
*of the Love of God and Christ! Whose*  
*soul can well hold to contem-*  
*plate it!*

Besides this admiration, and dissolution of soul, the thoughts hereof cannot but be thus further useful to me.

First, Seeing from what an infinite Glory, to what a mean nature and condition, the Son of God ( himself the infinite God ) stooped for the help and saving of men, I cannot but see my self in duty bound to the like humility, meekness and condescension; not to stand upon mine own petty interests, and consult nothing but self, when I have opportunity to do good to any inferior that wants my succour. Had Christ done so, he had never been  
made

Part. III. made flesh for me. Now *let the same*  
 Chap. 3. *mind be in me, which was also in*  
 Phil. 2. 5. *Christ Jesus.*

And again, seeing to what an height of excellency the nature of mankind is now advanced, it should prevail with me to put a due price upon it, and never willingly to dishonour, by any unworthy action, what God himself hath so honored. Did God stoop to vindicate my nature from the contempt and tyranny of the devil, and shall I, notwithstanding all the condescensions of his grace, still wilfully enslave and destroy my self.

Further, God having united the nature, of which I am a partner, to him, I should be ambitious of all means of uniting my self to him, that is, of doing all that may be on my part to further this union.

And especially, the thoughts hereof should quicken me this day to a zealous participating his body and blood. Can I consider God made flesh for me, God debasing himself

himself to be one with me, and is it possible that I can neglect, what is so much for my honour and interest, as the means of sealing my particular union with him? How can I esteem my self duly to have celebrated the memory of his being made flesh, if having means of partaking of that flesh which he took, I neglect it? And how much of ingratitude must such neglect have in it?

Lastly, seeing that one great end of our Saviours being incarnate was, to be the true light to man in the pursuit of his happiness, let me account it a noble degree of assimilation or being like my Saviour, if I can in any measure be a light to any herein. And if God have by office made me such, let me prize and honor my employment, and manifest my value of it by my diligence in it. *The more light I give, the nearer do I in my office come unto my Saviour.*

Thus much then of incitement have I hence to my duty. My other rules



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rules are not here so applicable :  
Wherefore in the conclusion of my  
Meditations I consider what of new  
all that I have meditated, doth sug-  
gest unto this daies prayers : And  
that I shall find } Praise.  
to be matter of } Petition.

As to the first,

1. The infinite goodness of God  
that he would at all think of resto-  
ring that nature, which was now an  
enemy to him, having wilfully fallen  
from him, cannot, if duly considered,  
but melt my heart into thankful  
praise of him.

2. That ( yet ) greater commen-  
dation of his goodness, his infi-  
nite condescension, his redeeming  
our nature in a way so glorious to  
it, as was the assumption of it unto  
his own nature, methinks should  
overcome my soul, and wrap it in-  
to an extasie of praise and admirati-  
on. In all likelihood, infinite wis-  
dom might have thought of a  
course, which would have been less  
honourable to man, and would not

so

so much ( if I may so speak ) have humbled the Deity. But *he would not bring us to glory ingloriously.* The meer consideration therefore of the honour which our Lords Incarnation puts upon our ill deserving nature, will not suffer me to be silent this day in his praises.

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And as to matter of Petition, surely it cannot but be right seasonable to beseech, 1. That all this may not be in vain unto me: And 2. That to that end, I may transcribe these Copies of goodness, humility, and purity, which shone in our Saviour's Incarnation, and walk in the *light*, as well of his *example*, as *doctrine*. And all this I may do in some such words as these.

*A prayer to be added to my other daily Prayers on Christmas-day*

O God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; who,  
H out

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Chap. 4.

out of thy meer goodness and pity, having promised thy Son to redeem fallen mankind, didst in the fulness of time faithfully perform with thine hand what thou hadst spoken with thy mouth, and send him into the world made, and about this time born of a woman: I, one of that redeemed, though vile nature, humbly adore this thy Grace and faithfulness. Eternity, Lord, is too little to bless thee for it: But Eternal praise is the greatest that I can wish thee: and mayst thou to Eternity receive due glory for this thine infinite Goodness and mercy!

O thou the only begotten Son, *by whom* thine eternal Father *made the Worlds*, who wast ever with God, and ever  
God

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Chap. 4.

God, the *brightness of his*  
*Glory and expresse Image of*  
*his Person*, yet wast pleased in  
time to be made flesh, and  
pitch thy Tabernacle in our  
nature: I, part of the purchase  
of thy blood, poor dust and  
ashes, but such as thine infinite  
Glory was pleased for my sake  
once to wear, and now to glo-  
rify, and set above Angels,  
most humbly bless thee, as  
well for this thy condescension,  
as for the honour done to man.  
*Thou tookest not upon thee the*  
*nature of Angels, but the seed*  
*of Abraham thou didst take.*  
Even so, O Saviour, for so it  
hath seemed good to thee.  
Thou thoughtest not the An-  
gelical nature low enough for  
thine Infinity to stoop to. Most  
dear Jesus! thou hast over-

H 2

come

Part. II.  
Chap. 10.

come me. I would praise thee,  
but I cannot further. —

Accept my silent ravishment,  
admiration, and faith. *I believe,  
Lord, help my unbelief.*

O holy Spirit the power of  
the most High; who after an  
unconceiveable sort, over-  
shadowing the Virgin Mother,  
didst frame in her sacred

Womb that Holy

\* *That is, was  
the Son of God.  
For in Scripture  
many times being  
called and (being,  
(word and thing)  
are one and the  
same.*

Thing which \* was  
called the Son of  
God; for this thy  
most wonderful and  
fearful (but to man  
most happy) opera-  
tion, I unworthy man  
bless thee: beseech-

ing thee to inspire my heart,  
that I may from this blessed  
Copy transcribe these Virtues  
of Goodness, Humility, Love,  
Purity.

Purity, and whatsoever of mine holy Saviour, either by his *Life* or *Doctrine* hath taught me: that so I walking in his light, he may be to me life everlasting, to the praise of thee, O Father, Son and holy Spirit, one undivided God Eternally. *Amen.*

Part. III.  
Chap. 4.

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CHAP. IV.

*An Exemplification of the former rules in St. Stephen's day: With a Prayer which may be used on any Saints day.*

FOR the Epistle, *Acts 7. v. 55.* to the end. Which, having read, I find to be a narrative or relation of St. Stephen's Martyrdom. And the chief substantials that my

Part. III.  
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thoughts fix upon, are, that Encouraging vision vouchsafed to him, in his entrance upon his suffering, and the manner of his taking his suffering.

St. *Stephen*, the first of those, who were to pass to Heaven in the fiery Chariot of a violent death, for the witness of Jesus, was now as good as sentenced: for the defence, which he had made, had only further incensed his persecutors. But he, who should make the first trial of so bold a passage had need of some more than ordinary encouragement: It pleased therefore him, whose Witness he was, to command away the Clouds, and through the opened Heavens to shew himself standing at the right hand of God, ready to receive him thither. And seeing the passage now so clear, and the end so glorious, it was not likely that good *Stephen* should stumble at a stone or two. *This method doth the gracious providence of God observe, that where he gives a bitterer cup, there he secretly*

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ly provides greater encouragements, Part. III.  
and thereby raiseth the strength of Chap. 4.  
his suffering servants.

Answerable to his encouragement do I find St. Stephen's carriage. For being cast out of the City, and stoned, all is so far from daunting him, that it scarce seems to have disturbed him, for he readily prays to his Saviour both in his own and his murtherers behalf. Particularly, these Virtues I cannot but observe livelily shining in him suffering.

1. Constancy, Resolution and Christian Magnanimity in those sufferings which a truly Christian cause ingaged him in. 2. Notwithstanding all his extraordinary assurances of Glory (Christ witnessing it to him from Heaven in that blessed Vision) perseverance in earnest prayers to the last. When the stones now struck him, he called upon God and said, &c. 3. Quietness, patience and serenity: The injustice of his sufferings exasperates



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not his Spirit, nor puts him into any passion or indisposition for his duty. 4. Meekness, Charity, Forgiveness, even towards them, who in that they were enemies to him, were enemies also to Christ. He *kneeled down* [An expression of the solemnity of his Prayers] *and cryed with a loud voice* [an expression of the earnestness and fervour of them.] A pattern most worthy imitation in suffering.

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Chap. 5.

A double benefit then the substance of this portion of Scripture (recollected according to direction) yields to me. The first, an Antidote or Remedy against dejection under, and slavish fear of suffering. If God at any time call me to the bearing a greater weight of afflictions than ordinary, let not me basely or sinfully decline them, but rather remember what St. *Stephen* (and indeed all the Children of God have) found by experience, that strength shall be given in proportionably, and that suitable to my misery

fery shall comfort and refresh- Part. III.  
ment come in to sustain my spirit, if Chap. 4.  
I nobly engage. Secondly, St. Ste-  
phen's example is to me a copy how I  
ought to suffer. Hence should I  
transcribe, Constancy, Dutifulness,  
Patience, Charity, and whatever o-  
ther virtues I can observe him to  
have exercised in his sufferings.

Now as to particular expressions  
here, that which concludes the rela-  
tion cannot well pass without notice.  
*And when he had said this, he fell  
asleep:* In sweetness and love he  
breathed out his soul; and he do-  
ing so, pity it was, but that to so  
sweet a soul, death it self should be  
sweetened, and so it was: *He fell  
asleep.* It teacheth me how I am to  
look on death. To all men death  
is but a sleep: good or bad, they  
must awake from it. But a good  
mans death should be look'd upon  
only as a falling asleep, or as ano-  
ther Scripture saith, *Resting from his  
labours:* Death is much the easiest  
to good men.

Of these notes or remarks which I have thus in my Meditations on this Reading made, those which I have mind chiefly to fasten upon my self (though I would not forget any) are these, which follow, of which therefore I register in my *Memorial* some hints, perhaps so as follows.

" St. Stephen's day, 1664.

" *Acts* 7.

" *Verse* 54, 55. God ever proportions his Servants comforts to their sufferings.

" *Verse* 60. He fell asleep. How sweetly do good men dye! Also, a fit Petition to use when I pray for enemies; *Lord lay not this sin to their charge.*

" I noted all along in St. Stephen these Christian Graces. 1. Constancy and Courage. 2. Perseverance in prayer, notwithstanding the immediate revelation of his instant Glory. 3. Patience. 4. Charity and Forgiveness.

*This pattern will serve for direction.*

*tion in what we ordinarily intend ; and it is brief, because it is supposed a pattern to be followed in what we in daily course observe or set down. But if on Holy-days any have a mind to be larger in their setting down their Meditations, this hinders not.*

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Chap. 4.

The Gospel, Matt. 23. v. 34. to the end.

Observing the scope of this Scripture, I find it to be a Prophecy of the dismal calamity which should befall the *Jews*, by reason of their wilful rejecting the Gospel; and cutting off them who were sent to preach it, according as their stubborn fore-fathers had cut off the Prophets. A judgment should befall them, which should be in some measure a proportionable revenge of all the righteous blood which had been shed, from *Abel to Zacha.* ver. 35. ry: and this by reason that they did persist in shedding such righteous blood; as they indeed did in the case of our Saviour, and his persecuted

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Chap. 4.

cuted followers. Their City therefore should become a desolation, and the very worship of God being laid waste, they should expect the Messiah so long, that they should even bless him that could tell them any thing of him.

This is the general substance of this Scripture. Difficulty in it I find none to stop me: I proceed therefore to enquire what of advantage I can make by the reading of it, according to my proposed course: And, 1. I find my self, by the observing the two first verses of it, much satisfied touching one case, in which I have many times thought God to deal very hardly, to wit touching his visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children. Verse 35. It is said, that upon that generation should fall *all the righteous blood spilt from Abel to Zachary*; which, at the first look seems very severe. But the reason is rendred ver. 34. because of *the Prophets, wise men and scribes, which Christ sent amongst them,*

*them, some they would kill and crucifie, some scourge in their Synagogues, others persecute from City to City, according as their forefathers ever had served the Prophets: Which gives me ground to conclude: That children seldom or never inherit their fathers punishments or the wrath due to their fathers sins, but where they first prove inheritors of those sins: And in this case, because they have seen their fathers sins, and the punishments which have befallen them for them, and yet not mended by their examples, it is but justice, that their fathers sin should be visited upon them, that they should have the same or like punishments as their fathers had, and greater.*

Then, 2. I cannot but note how slowly and unwillingly God comes to judgment. Thus much those words, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem*, suggest to me. Our Saviour, I see, cannot foretel this desertion and rejection of the *Jews* without a lamentation taken up, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem,*

Part. III.

Chap. 4.

cuted followers. Their City therefore should become a desolation, and the very worship of God being laid waste; they should expect the Messiah so long, that they should even bless him that could tell them any thing of him.

This is the general substance of this Scripture. Difficulty in it I find none to stop me: I proceed therefore to enquire what of advantage I can make by the reading of it, according to my proposed course: And, 1. I find my self, by the observing the two first verses of it, much satisfied touching one case, in which I have many times thought God to deal very hardly, to wit touching his visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children. Verse 35. It is said, that upon that generation should fall *all the righteous blood spilt from Abel to Zachary*; which, at the first look seems very severe. But the reason is rendred ver. 34. because of *the Prophets, wise men and scribes, which Christ sent amongst them,*

*them, some they would kill and crucifie, some scourge in their Synagogues, others persecute from City to City, according as their forefathers ever had served the Prophets: Which gives me ground to conclude: That children seldom or never inherit their fathers punishments or the wrath due to their fathers sins, but where they first prove inheritors of those sins: And in this case, because they have seen their fathers sins, and the punishments which have befallen them for them, and yet not mended by their examples, it is but justice, that their fathers sin should be visited upon them, that they should have the same or like punishments as their fathers had, and greater.*

Then, 2. I cannot but note how slowly and unwillingly God comes to judgment. Thus much those words, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem,* suggest to me. Our Saviour, I see, cannot foretel this desertion and rejection of the *Jews* without a lamentation taken up, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem,*



Part. III.

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*salem.* So unwilling is he to punish that he even weeps at the very thoughts of it. [This is a very affecting consideration, and of special force to quicken me to repentance, and is therefore to be noted to that purpose.]

Lastly, examining further, according to the rules proposed, whether there be no instance of Gods judgments against sinners, no threat to deter me from any sin, or the like, I find there is, and cannot but stay my thoughts a while upon this heavy denunciation of woe against those who were outwardly Gods own people, for their rejecting the offers of Grace, and upon foolish prejudices not acknowledging, or not being willing to see the light, which yet they could not but see,

Rom. 11.

21.

*And if God spared not the natural branches, how much less will he spare me, who am only grafted in, out of the wild olive, if I be guilty of the same sin?* it concerns me therefore in this case to look into my self: the very

very reading of this Scripture ought to be to me a warning. And let me see : Am not I guilty of the like *resisting light* and *rejecting grace* ? What do I else when I sin presumptuously , and only not *wilfully* ? Do not I then shut mine eyes against the light, and offer violence to the convictions, which come from those Scriptures, whose Authors, the *Jews*, were rejected, for offering violence unto ? They rejected their living testimony, I not only that ( for that I have recorded in the Scripture ) but the very voice of their blood, by which they sealed the truth of their testimony. Oh sinful and ungracious wretch !

Now if any such as this be my case ; let my meditations here rest a while. Let me consider whether in this Scripture, which hath thus convinced me of my sin, there be not somewhat which may reclaim me. And truly there is. 1. ( That which, hath already been mentioned ) Gods unwillingness to punish, his  
patience.

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Chap. 4.

patience and forbearance. And hath not this been great towards me? How often hath the warm offers of love and pardon invited me, as they did them! May not I say, God would have many a time *gathered me under his wings*? And do not these very warnings, that if I am not reclaimed, I must be forsaken, speak Gods present unwillingness (if any thing will work) to forsake me? Is not this as much as an *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem*? Again, 2. I here see, that though God bore long with his people, he would not bear always, being that they did persist in resistance of his Grace. And truly I know not how soon God may call home from me his opposed Spirit, and, suffering his Grace no longer to be abused, leave me as he did the *Jews*, in my own stubbornness and wilfulness to perish.

After this sort may I employ a while my thoughts; and if time will suffer, thus ought I so long to meditate,

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tate, till my moved heart have taken Part. III.  
up full resolutions of following the Chap. 4.  
guidance of Gods Spirit, and yielding to his Grace. And these warnings or convictions from the Word, together with my resolutions upon them, should I (if able, register in that other of my paper Books, which I call my *Accomptal*, or if not) take such solemn notice of, that I forget not. But if any necessary matter force me to depart my privacy, before my meditations arrive at such a ripeness, yet let me not fail to take notice of the warning which I received (and set it down in my *Accomptal*) that so upon my \* fasting See Par. 4.  
day, when I review the actions of Chap. 4.  
that week, I may be sure not to forget it, but to humble my self for my former miscarriages, and consider for the future, how I may turn my feet into new ways.

But to return to the devotions of this present day: So much only remains now to compleat my present meditations as to consider, what

what of new from all will be seasonable to be added to my accustomed Prayers. And here will be,

*First*, Matter of confession touching my resisting Grace, and not walking according to the light which I have had.

*Secondly*, Matter of praise.

1. For these warnings, which are so many calls to repentance, and invitations to happiness.

2. For the testimony which the Gospel received, and doth to this day receive, by the doctrine and death of St. *Stephen*, and for the constancy, faithfulness, patience, charity and meekness which shone forth in him.

*Thirdly*, Matter of Petition.

1. For grace, that I may from hence forth yield unto all motions of Gods holy Spirit. 2. That when ever God shall call me to suffer (as he doth frequently by the crosses, oppositions, frustrations, &c. which I meet with in the course of my life) I may manifest the like meekness, patience, charity,

charity, holy resolution and mind- Part. III.  
fulness of God by prayer and all o- Chap. 4.

ther seasonable duties. All which, having considered how I may in some sober and orderly way express or represent before God, let me either insert in my wonted prayers, or in some short prayer to be added to them comprise as well as I can. A pattern whereof very particular it will not be so expedient to set down here, but rather so to frame a Prayer with some respect to the foregoing heads, as that it may in general be accommodated to, or used upon the Feasts of any Saints or Martyrs.

## A Method for

*A short Prayer which may be added to our ordinary Prayers upon the feast of any Saint or Martyr by our Church appointed to be kept.*

**O** Lord, the God of truth and holiness, who at sundry times, and in sundry ways hast revealed thy self unto the world, by thy holy Prophets of old, and in these last days by thy Son, of whom thou hast since in all ages raised up thy Saints and Servants to be witnesses. I humbly bless thee as for all the revelations of thy will, and confirmations of thy truth; so especially for the testimony given thereunto by the  
life

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life ( (a) doctrine ) ( and Part. III.  
Chap. 4.  
(b) death ) of thy servant

St. s. whom thou madest

unto the world not

only a witness of thy

truth but a pattern

of holiness : and I

beseech thee to par-

don both all my op-

posing , and all my

holding in unrighte-

ousness those truths,

which either he or

any other of thy ser-

vants have preached, or left

on record. I acknowledge and

bewail my guiltiness here-

in: Keep me, blessed Father,

for the future (at least) from

all such presumptuous sins;

and grant that the same Spi-

rit resting upon me, which

dwelt upon them, may beget

in

(a) *The word Do-  
ctrine is chiefly to  
be used upon the  
feasts of the blessed  
Apostles.*

(b) *If the feast be  
not the memorial  
of a Martyr, the  
word death is to be  
left out.*



Part. III.

Chap. 4.

in me the like humility, charity (\*\*) diligence, resolution and perseverance in all

*\* Here insert the mention of any Christian virtue, in which thou hast observed the Saint whose memory thou celebratest to excel.*

holiness. Let me as they both in life and death glorifie thee, according to my measure, so that amongst those heavenly Hosts and blessed Society of thy Servants, I may have some (though it should be the lowest) place, eternally to praise and enjoy thee O Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one most glorious God. Amen.

## CHAP. V.

*Of what remains to compleat my  
private Festival devotions,  
to wit, Almes-giving.*

SOME time, besides what my ordinary course requires, being thus spent in Reading, Meditation, and Prayer, futable to the particular regard of the day, it only remains to compleat my devotions, that according as God hath blessed me I set apart somewhat for the poor; for it is not certainly my self, or my rich neighbours only, which I am to feast upon Holy-days: and however, it may be, I cannot give in my closet, yet I may in my Closet, and at the end of my devotion most conveniently, cheerfully and religiously ( and it may be most liberally ) consecrate, what I can spare, to such pious use, by separating

Part. III.

Chap. 4.

ting it from the rest, which I reserve for ordinary uses. And somewhat every Holy-day would I cast to have thus to consecrate to God, though it were the less: By the observing this course I shall commonly, if not always, have wherewithal to relieve the wants of such, whom I meet with and find to be truly indigent; which, if I do not use myself to some such method, I may haply many times want a stock for. Whether to distribute it in money, or in that which is bought with my money, and may be more suitable to the wants of those whom I relieve, a little Christian discretion will easily direct and the more to enforce this practice, let me consider how naked, miserable and stingey solemn Thanksgiving is, without somewhat of Almshouses-giving. Then surely I rejoyce in a way most becoming the mercies I and mankind have received, when as many as I have wherewithal conveniently to help, have cause to rejoyce for my rejoycing:

# Private Devotion. 169

rejoycing: and on the contrary, if Part. III.  
Chap. 5.  
being able (by doing but what is my duty at least what I well may) to

revive poor and disconsolate persons, I suffer them (through my close-handedness) to groan under their distresses upon days of publick joy, what a blemish is it to those days joy, and what want of Christian goodness and charity doth it bespeak in me? I should rather be greedy and ambitious to make all the world rejoyce with me.

Now, for the making at least thus much of Almes giving an act of my private devotion, no one will, I presume, be dissatisfied, who either considers the premises and the nature of the thing, or what our Saviour saith touching this matter, *Let not thy right hand know what in this case thy left hand doth.* Let therefore, I say, my charity crown my devotions: and as I put out that (whatsoever it is) which I have to devote unto God, for the relief of his wanting servants, it will not be

Mat. 6. 3.

I amifs

Part. III.

Chap. 5.

amiss to use some short ejaculation directed unto his all seeing Majesty, by which I may express my chearful offering it unto him, that is my setting it apart for the poor, whom he hath commanded me to succour, and promised me a  *blessing*  if I  *consider* . Now that may be done in some such words as these.

Psa. 41. 1.

**O** Lord, whose is the earth and the fulness thereof, I offer unto thee ( what, by thy gift and blessing, I have ) this small testimony of my thankfulness and duty, to be bestowed upon those wanting ones whom thy providence shall give me opportunity to relieve. Be thou pleased through the blood of my Saviour to accept it, and pardon all my vain expences.  *Amen.*

The using some such course as  
this

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this proposed will make me more liberal in these my acts of charity: for how can I offer niggardly to this my bountiful God, when I am conscious to my self, if I have somewhat considerable, (if I will well husband all) which I may devote to him, and yet not abridge my self or mine, either of necessities or conveniences: and hereto I shall be the more quickened, if I remember I offer to God, who both gave me, and sees all I have. Now *whether I may* upon such a day meet with opportunity to my mind, or such person to bestow it on, as the discretion of my charity could wish, or whether I cannot; yet let me account it really given to God, and therefore separate it from the rest of the store, so that ever after I may look upon it as devoted, and not to be touched, except to distribute it to the poor; for I have really, by the prayer above-made, devoted and consecrated it to God. But if any fatal necessity should constrain the meddling with any part of

ought thus separated, let me religiously observe to return it again to the poor mans purse or stock, with an expiatory usury : that is, with somewhat more, which may make recompence for my first diminishing it. And thus we will leave the private devotions of Festivals, and consider in the next place, what will be meet to be performed on the Lords day.

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## CHAP. VI.

*That the Lords day ought to be kept holy, and what that means.*

**T**Ouching the observation of the Lords day, though I judge them indiscreet friends unto it, who refer the institution of it mainly to the fourth Commandment, yet I put the keeping of it holy so far out of all question, that I cannot but account him very unchristian, who either is slighty herein himself, or  
goes

goes about to possess others that they may be so without sin.

Part. III.  
Chap. 6.

( 1. ) The natural justice of the thing, that there should be some time set apart amongst the Christian community; for the publick and solemn worship of God ; ( 2. ) The antiquity and authority of that Apostolick Canon ( Recorded partly in expresse terms in Scripture, and (if it were not ) sufficiently manifest by their practice ) which hath set apart this time ( 3. ) Our Saviours honouring this day with his resurrection thereupon, which gave occasion to its being set apart, ( 4. ) The custom of all Christian Churches through all ages, and from the very Apostles days, ( 5. ) Nay the practice of our Lord himself on this day meeting his assembled Disciples, are all of them arguments beyond contradiction, and *warrant* (sufficiently) *divine*, that it is to be esteemed consecrate or set apart to the worship of God. And then the force which the fourth Commandment in equity bears,

The true grounds of sanctifying the Lords day summed up. 1. Cor. 16. 1, 2.



Part. III.  
Chap. 6.

Heb. 4. 10.

that what time is set apart or consecrated to God should be sanctified, that is spent to those separate purposes and intents, for which it was set apart ( which I say is the meaning of sanctifying or keeping holy any time ) sufficiently and beyond all evasion enjoyns its being kept holy, it being supposed once to be set apart as it is before proved to have been. And certainly ( if as is undeniable , it be the duty of every Christian, as much as may be to keep all his life as a perpetual Sabbathism or holy rest unto God ) it must needs be an argument of a very profane, worldly, and unchristian spirit, not to afford God this day free from sensual pleasures, and worldly cares or labours. Wherefore, I say, the keeping holy of the Lords day, I put out of all question, and would have no man flatter himself, that he is a devout Christian, who useth either, by idleness or pleasures, or unnecessary worldly business, to prophane what ( the Church,

Church, and being that the Church hath done it by good warrant and power transmitted to her by Christ) God himself hath allowed. *Profanation* I call it: for if the spending it to holy purposes be to sanctifie it, then the spending it contrarily upon ordinary or unworthy practices, is to prophane it. And if we may not give that which is holy unto dogs, it is then surely most intolerable to take that time, which by divine Law ought to be holy unto God, and give it to his enemies, the Devil, this world, and our own lusts, which we do when we spend the Lords day either in idleness, pleasures, or needless wordly matters.

Part. III.  
Chap. 6.

Mat. 7. 6.

Works of *Charity* or *Mercy* are acts of *Holiness*; and works of *necessity*, so far forth as they are works of necessity, are acts of *mercy*, and consequently the doing of either of these (that is works of *Charity* or *Necessity*) when due occasion calls me thereto, is rather sanctifying than unhallowing the Lords day

Part. III.

Chap. 7.

Mat. 6.

( especially if I do them out of duty towards God, and in his fear ) and for this I have his warrant, who tells me that he better accepts *Mercy than Sacrifice.*

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## CHAP. VII.

*Of Preparation for the Lords day. A preparatory Prayer thereto.*

**S**Eeing then that the Lords day is to be kept holy, that is, to be spent in the worship and service of God, for which it is set apart, it concerns me to consider how I may spend it in a way most complying with this its design or intendment. And I shall easily, upon the very consideration of the nature of Gods worship, be convinced, that it is in a manner impossible for me duly to sanctifie it, if I come unto it hot and reaking from my wordly business

finess. For, being I am to worship God in spirit and in truth, with all my mind, soul and strength, and in a word with my whole man, evident it is that I am unable so to do, while my heart yet remains unemptied of the world: and being unfit to worship God, I am not, while so, in a due state to sanctifie this day. Wherefore the right sanctification of the Lords day is to begin with Preparation.

And it is a right wholesom institution, that upon the Evening before it, there should be Prayers in every Parish Church, which is grown now too much into disuse by reason only (that I can imagine) of the degeneracy of the age. If there be such custom kept up in my Parish, I would not, but upon necessity, be absent from those preparatory prayers: At which though I should be supposed to have been present, yet would I not content my self therewith: but, whether I have been imployed publickly in preparations

Part. III.  
Chap. 7.

rations or not, in my course of devotion, on Saturday night, take so much more time than I do ordinarily, as might serve for some preparatory Meditations and Prayers.

The least which I can do to this purpose in my Meditations, is, *First*, To examine whether there be not some sin or sad miscarriage of the week past, which lies unrepented of, and so may blast my next days performances. And if any there be, *secondly*, to consider of it more particularly, its aggravations, its nature, whether it be not such an one, part of the *Repentance* for which must be *Reconciliation*, *Restitution*, or somewhat like: and accordingly to apply my self to what I in my conscience, and in the fear of God do judge due repentance. *Thirdly*, to endeavour the emptying my head of worldly (at least distracting) cares, to bid them be gone now, till a day for them return: And lastly, so to contrive (as neer as I can) all my affairs

See Par. 4  
Chap. 6.  
Sect. 4.5.  
&c.

affairs for the next day, that both I and my family may have as little avocations, or matters to call away our minds from holy duties as may be. This by way of Meditation.

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Chap. 7.

My Prayers must be suitable to my condition. If any such sin, as before mentioned, be found, that must be confessed, bewailed, and pardon craved, together with grace for the future against it: which may be done by putting in the mention of that sin in the proper *space* left for such purpose. But besides this, it will be necessary to add some particular petitions for due preparation or disposition of heart for the duties of the next day. *First*, for a quiet, settled, and composed mind, so that I may attend, with all my soul, my holy concerns or business. *Secondly*, for enlivened affections, that I may not be dull and heartless, but of a tender and melting spirit. *Thirdly*, for a pliable, ductile, yielding and easie mind, that I may mix the word with faith,

Part. III.  
Chap. 7.

faith, and render the obedience of faith. *Lastly*, because both my own and the Congregations benefit and edification much depends upon the Ministers due and affectionate discharge of his office, it is therefore fit that I forget not him, but commend him to the assistance of the Spirit. To which purpose the following prayer may be either inserted in some fit place towards the end of my prayers or added to them,

**O** Lord, from whom the preparations of the heart are : The day now approacheth which, being holy unto thee, I am to spend in thy more solemn worship. Many sins there are, by me not duly repented of, which may justly bring upon me a curse instead of a blessing. (Especially

cially my [<sup>\*\*</sup>] may make my very prayers an abomination to thee. ) But accept

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Chap. 7.

thou, I beseech thee, of this my confession of them, and (at least desired ) sorrow for them. Turn my heart from them for the future : and through

*\* Here insert the mention of such particular sins which thou hast found thy self guilty of, &c.*

the blood of my Saviour so remove the Guilt of them, that they may not hinder good things from me. Let the effusions of thy grace both upon me and all the Congregations of thy people be ever plentiful. Let my heart be fixed, and none either vain or worldly thoughts lodge within me this night. Quicken me by thy holy Spirit, that I may draw near unto thee with



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Chap. 7.

with a true heart, and be fervent in Spirit in thy service; and with a good and honest heart receiving thy word, may understand and keep it and bring forth fruit with patience, and unto perfection. Remember thou thy servants who are to dispence thy Mysteries unto thy people: and especially him upon whose teaching I am to wait. Pardon their sins and frailties; Open their mouths, guide their minds and tongues, that they may deliver thy truths in the demonstration of thy Spirit: and let thy work so prosper in their hands, that both themselves and others may be built up in our most holy faith, to the perfecting thy Church, and the eternal glory of thy name

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name thereby, through our Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus. *Amen.* Part. III.  
Chap. 8.

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### CHAP. VIII.

*Of the true manner of sanctifying the Lords day.*

#### SECT. I.

*Generally before I go to Church.*

NOW as to my Closet duties upon this day, lest the sole consideration of them should breed any neglect, forgetfulness, or disturbance of the duties to be performed in the family, and in the publick assembly, it will be most expedient to consider the whole duties of that day, both publick, private and secret, and set down each in their natural order.

First then, as upon no day we suppose

suppose our Christian to be slothful, so least of all upon the Lords day, but to be up in a convenient season, both himself, and, if any are under his charge, to see that they are so too. A convenient season I call that, which, every mans health and occasions being considered, will agree therewith, and leave time sufficient for the discharge of the duties of the day. And supposing the publick service to begin generally about nine of the clock, between six and seven will be a good hour: and all things being well ordered may consist very well with most mens health and occasions. And of this time, which passeth between my rising and going to Church, if an hour and the odd parts be divided between the devotions of the family and the Closet, so that half an hour be spent in the one, and the other half with the odd time in my Closet, it may do very well, and the common occasions of most houses being considered, so much time may be allowed

lowed: If so much cannot be afforded to this work: yet let some; and what day soever I dispence with double prayers ( I mean prayer in my Closet, and prayer in my family) yet this day let me omit neither. It is a bad *omen* or unhappy token to begin the sanctification of the Lords day, by the breach of my ordinary course of devotion, and an argument it is likely to be but negligently sanctified by me. Besides many in my family may perhaps make no other preparation for the worship of God than what they make by joyning in the family-devotions: it will be therefore the more necessary to make sure of thus much.

## SECT. II.

*Of secret devotion in the Closet before going to Church.*

NOW my private devotions will be for the main the same this day as others. Only in my Meditations it is to be remembered that I  
examine

Part. III.  
Chap. 8.

Chap. 7.

examine my self touching my preparations for the solemn worship of God that day : and if any thing in my preparatory devotion be wanting (any sin unconfessed, unrepented of, &c. ) in these my morning devotions, let that be done. And how compleat so ever I may conceive my preparations to have been, yet let me not in my prayers in private that morning forget to send up some petitions for preparing and assisting grace, to the end I may more spiritually go through the duties of the day : for the doing of which I cannot now want directions, after a preparatory prayer already considered upon. And these my Closet devotions it will be necessary be first performed, for that they will very well fit me to perform my devotions in my family with more fervency.

SECT.

## SECT. III.

*Of private devotion in the family before going to Church. A digression touching what our devotion in the family is always to consist of.*

**T**Hese therefore being done, and it being now somewhat above half an hour till the time we usually go to Church, I am to call all my family (except in extraordinary cases of sickness, &c.) together to prayer; at which time all of them, who that day can go to Church, which should be as many as may be, should appear dressed as they are to go, that so, after the family devotions performed, within a very short space we might altogether resort to the publick place of Gods worship.

Now if question be made what the devotions of the family are to consist of, the answer is; they cannot well consist of less than these  
two

Part. III.  
Chap. 8.

two parts, *Reading* and *Prayer*.

By *Reading* here I understand chiefly the reading the Word of God : and that it is the duty of the head of the family, either himself to read ( or cause by some other to be read ) the holy Scriptures in the hearing of the family ; none can question, who considers those frequent Commands to the ancient people of God, *to teach their children the Law of God and his judgments, and dealings with them.*

Deut 4. 6.  
&c.

Now how they can be taught those things by their parents, from whom they never hear of them, cannot be understood : nor will any reasonable person think these commands fulfilled by the meer teaching their Children the *Belief, Lords Prayer, and ten Commandments* ( though this must be most sure to be done ) for we find of old they were to acquaint their Children of Gods wonderful works in delivering them *out of the Land of Egypt:*  
And

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And in like manner we Christians Part. III.  
to teach our children Gods Miracles Chap. 8.  
of grace, in freeing us by his Son  
out of the bondage of sin; which,  
how it can be better done, than as  
God hath thought fit to teach it to  
the world, to wit by the Holy  
Scriptures, none will easily find  
out.

Now for the method to be observed in reading the Scriptures in our family, that which was above commanded for use in the Closet may haply be most proper. And if I so order it, that I read the same portion of Scripture in my family, and in my Closet, it may be much for my edification: the double reading it will set it deeper; both in my memory and in my understanding. But then, lest I read faster and more in my family than in my Closet, and for other reasons; it will be necessary that either my Closet devotions go before my family devotions, or that at least I so contrive my readings, that what I last read in my Closet,



Part. III.  
Chap. 8.

set, I the next time read in my family.

Instead of Meditation which was one part of my Closet devotion, if in my family I use to examine my people, what they have learnt and observed out of what hath been read; and where none takes notice of what is mainly observable; there suggest it to them, it may not be amiss, provided it be done soberly ( without a long deal of prate and meddling with curious matters ) and without vain-glory.

The Prayers which I use in my family, except upon some very eminent occasions, may best be the Prayers of the Church. These are easie and best understandable: and the use of them in our families, will fit the plainest people in our family to use them with more devotion and understanding in the publick. Notwithstanding I confess my judgment in this case to be that the *Injunction* of them doth not in strictness reach to private families, but there is a liberty

berly left; yet if we use that liberty only thus, so as freely and of our own accord to prefer the Prayers of the Church, I really judge (generally) it will be the best. Some particular cases there may be, as when any great judgment lies upon the family, or the like, which may be admitted as exceptions to the general rule, and in which cases it may be expedient to use either other or more Prayers than those extant in our Church Liturgy.

Part. III.  
Chap. 8.

The general course then of my family devotions will be this, First, he who prays begins with the last clause of that Exhortation thus:

( *I pray and beseech you, as many as, &c.* ) Then follows the Confession:

( *Almighty and most merciful, &c.* )

The Absolution is to be left out, except he be a Minister who reads.

Then comes the Lords Prayer and Versicles. Which being done, all

rising, give attention to one reading a Psalm and a Chapter, or so much of them as the chief of the family

shall

Part. III.  
Chap. 8.

shall appoint. This being ended, if the Master of the family, or any by him deputed, will at that time examine, or briefly (as before said) instruct any touching what hath been read, here such examination will most seasonably come in: After which, he who reads the Prayers saying (*Let us pray*) all kneel down, and he begins with the Versicles, *O Lord shew thy mercy, &c.* and so proceeds with the Prayers in their order, as they stand, morning and evening. Added before the prayer of St. *Crysostom* may be, the Prayer or Collect for all conditions of men; or the General Thanksgiving; or in fit seasons; the Ember week prayer, the prayer for the High Court of Parliament; for suitable Weather, &c. with other Collects, at the discretion of the Master of the family.

Upon the Lords day in the morning, after the prayer for the Bishops, Clergy and the people, that is just before the blessing, it may be convenient

ent to add, for preparing grace unto all, the prayer in the beginning of the Communion service [ *Almighty God to whom, &c.* ] ( or if there be any fitter in the Liturgy found ) and that at the end of the Communion service [ *Prevent us, O Lord, in all our doings with, &c.* ]

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Chap. 8.

And in the evening upon the Lords day, after the same prayer for the Bishops, &c. to add that prayer for fruitfulness by the means of grace, which is in the end of the Communion service ( *Grant we beseech thee, Almighty God, that, &c.* ) Thus much then as to the order of devotion in the family, both ordinarily and upon the Lords day.

## SECT. IV.

*Of resorting to the Church.*

THESE devotions both in my Family and Closet being thus performed, it will soon be time to appear before God in the Church. And I am to account no celebrating

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of

of the Lords day like to that in publick, with a full Congregation of Christian people. Hither therefore I early, with as many of my family as possibly ( at least conveniently ) I can, resort, both my self taking with me, if I can read, my Bible, and Common-prayer-book; and seeing that the rest of my family, who can read, do the same; And ( especially if the way be long ) I watch very narrowly over my self, and those of mine with me, that our discourse be not vain and idle; much less purely worldly, so as to unfit our hearts: and as to my private self, the same care am I to have of my thoughts. Seasonable it will be to think of the happiness which I enjoy, in that I come into the Courts of God, and feed upon the fat things of his House, and to praise God in my heart that I have such freedom of access unto him: in which case many happy and proper Ejaculations may I furnish my self with, out of holy *David's* Psalms.

SECT.

## SECT. V.

*Of due behaviour in the Church.*

**B**Eing come to the place, which is holy to Gods worship, I enter it with all reverence, bare, if my Sex so require, remembering that though God be present every where, yet is he more specially in the places where his people are worshipping him: and any postures of reverence, that I use there, are acts of worship unto his unseen but present Majesty, and therefore cannot but be mistaken very much, if judged by any superstitious. Having therefore orderly taken my place, I should (not out of custom but devotion) bow to God my knees and beg his gracious presence and blessing towards me, and the congregation of his people that shall there meet that day, which I may do in this or the like form.

**O** Lord, who though thou dwellest not in Temples made with hands, yet hast promised to meet and bless thy people wherever thou hast recorded thy Name; be pleased to be gratiouly present to thy servant here worshipping before thee, and to the Congregation of thy people, which shall here assemble themselves this day for thy worship. Pardon every one, who hath not prepared himself according to the preparation of the Sanctuary. Quicken us all for thy Names sake; teach us to do thy Will, and build us up in our most holy faith, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

I know there are some who object against this practice, but I could never yet see any reason in their pretensions.

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This therefore being done, if the Congregation be not yet fully met, it is not for me to imploy my self in vain discourse with any of my neighbours: but either to meditate on somewhat which may be seasonable, or, if I can, to read.

And it may not be improper, till I am well versed in it, and know my duty therein well, to read the Church Liturgy, Rubrick (that is, the directions which are mingled with the prayers, for their use) and all; taking one day some part of it, and another day another, till I have gone through it wholly. By this means, discreetly used, I shall be able more readily to joyn with the publick in the use thereof: But if the Congregation be fully met, and Service beginning or begun, I am to yield all possible attention, remembering God requires my whole man,



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all mine heart, soul and mind, yea and my very body too: Wherefore so I am to place and order even that ( I mean my very body ) as the worship of God, and the Churches instructions for the worship of that God, require; *kneeling, standing and answering* still wheresoever I ought. Nor am I to censure any thing, if I do not yet understand its use: for by so much as I do understand, I cannot but in a good measure see the wisdom and pious intentions of the Church; By those answers, which I with the rest of the people are to make, I find my self much quickened, and my wandring heart many times called home; the use therefore of these, as I should not omit, so should the benefit which I have found by them, be an argument to me; to conform my self to every other practice enjoyned, not doubting, but that all of them will in the end have as good an effect as this upon me.

During the celebration of Gods  
worship,

worship, if my mind at any time Part. III.  
 be run away from my work, I am, Chap. 8.  
 as soon as ever I perceive it, secretly  
 to check my self, to call it home,  
 and in my heart say, *Lord pardon and*  
*help thy servant*, or some such thing,  
 and in a word, to imploy it as fully  
 as I can about my buliness, remem-  
 bring not only how displeasing it is  
 to God but how unprofitable to my  
 self to draw near unto him with my  
 body only, and honour him with  
 my lips, when my soul is afar  
 off.

Whatsoever I hear of the Word,  
 read or preached, I must remember  
 all along to apply unto my self, not  
 carping at, or censuring the Preach-  
 er, but taking all in the best sense,  
 ( *Possibly it may be long of my sins he*  
*did no better, or so ill* ) nor looking  
 so much how it concerns others, as  
 my own particular state and man-  
 ners. And if there be any thing  
 which more neerly toucheth and  
 concerneth me, that let me be sure  
 by some means or other to keep or

Part. III.  
Chap. 8.

set home upon my memory: perhaps there may be some place of Scripture cited to confirm, explain, or illustrate it; let me note that place, and the being able to find it, may, in case I am forgetful, bring the matter to my remembrance.

The exercises of divine worship being all ended, I am with the same reverence to depart the Church with which I entered it (not rudely, hastily and disorderly, as the common manner of the multitude is) courteously saluting any of my neighbours; which I have occasion to salute, and that with inward love and good will: remembering that the ancient Christians had such an usage at their Assemblies, as *the Kiss of Charity*; it is but Christian therefore for me to use a charitable and chearful Salutation to any of my Christian neighbours.

Rom. 16.  
15, 16.  
1 Pet. 5.  
14.

SECT.

## SECT. VI.

Part. III.  
Chap. 8.

*Of due behaviour between the Morning and Evening Service.*

**M**Y return with my family home should be with the same gravity and care, with which was my passage to the Church : my talk rather of what I heard or learnt ; than of any worldly matter , except necessary occasions enforce the contrary. And being come home, one of my first businesses should be to step aside into my Closet, if possibly I can, and there, according as I have found my self affected, to apply my self unto God. If I have been awakened to any duty , raised to any hopes of Gods favour, strengthened in any of my holy resolutions, informed of any thing touching which I was ignorant, or the like , there briefly to bless God for it : if I have been dull and unprofitable, there to bewail it ; both which may be done after this or some such sort. I

**I** Bless, thee O Lord my God,  
for the comforts of thy  
House; for thy awakenings  
of me to my duty; for any  
softenings of my heart, and  
sense of thy love, or hopes of  
enjoying thee hereafter. Not  
unto me, O Lord, not unto me,  
who am a vain, hard hearted,  
sinful wretch of my self, but to  
thy holy Name be the praise.  
Now encrease, I beseech thee,  
this thy goodness to me; and  
confirm me in thy Grace ever-  
more; Let me grow in the  
knowledge, fear and love of  
thee; and any impressions  
thereof, which I have this day  
received, suffer me not to  
loose; but enable me to  
bring forth fruit unto per-  
fection, to the glory of thy  
Name;

Name, through Jesus Christ, Part. III.  
Chap. 8.  
my blessed Lord and Media-  
tor. *Amen.*

If this Prayer may not suit with my condition, it may be presumed, that as I have knowledge enough to see it doth not, so I have abilities enough, in some tollerable way, to represent and bewail before God my barrenness, heedlessness, wordliness, carnality, and whatever other great distempers I find in my soul, which accordingly I ought briefly to do. And this being done, let me recollect my self, and view over in my mind those severals, which I have that day learned or been affected with: for this will further imprint them upon the memory. Less than a quarter of an hour may suffice hereto: and though haply sometimes I may see occasion to allow more, yet so much sure I may afford at all times.

Having thus fastned upon my  
spirit

spirit my spiritual gains, I now depart to my company for the necessary refreshment of my body which this day was not appointed to abridge me of. Let me therefore be chearful, and eating my meat in singleness of heart rejoyce before my God: but let not my joy by any means be wanton, idle, vain, or intemperate.

Of the rest of the time which passeth between the publick duties of the day, the imployment ought to be sacred, at least wholesom, and such which may not indispose me for the remaining part of the days work: and hereof much care is to be had.

First, As to my discourse: touching which if it be the Apostles Precept, at all times to be observed, that *our speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt*, certainly more specially ought it to be such on this day. And though it cannot be accounted absolutely sinful to converse about secular matters of concernment, if  
occasion

occasion so require, yet, 1. To be wholly taken up with these cannot but argue a greater care of this world, than sense of Christianity; if so be there be any truth in that Speech of him who is Infallible: *Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.* And, 2. To be needlessly meddling with such affairs, or idly busying our selves about other mens actions and concerns (which are the ordinary subject of mens discourses after dinner on the Lords day) is at the best but a mixture of worldliness and vanity: and it is made the character of naughty men, that *their tongues walk through the earth.*

Part. III.  
Chap. 8.

Mat. 12.  
34.

Psal. 73.9.

Secondly, As to my actions care too is to be taken: It's not questionless unlawful upon due occasion; that is, on account of mine own or others necessity, or considerable conveniency, to put mine hands to an ordinary action, as is evident from our Saviours both *Doctrine* Luk. 13. and *Practice*: But as abovesaid  
of



Part. III.  
Chap. 8.

of *discourse* so now of *business* to be needlessly imployed in worldly matters and ordinary work, cannot but be some kind of profanation of the day, as being contrary to its sanctification, that is, the spending it to other uses and ends, than those for which it was set apart. And albeit in this case no certain perpetual rule is to be set, ( the conditions of men being various ) but each mans Christian discretion and piety ought to meet out to himself what he in his own conscience, and in the fear of God considering his occasions, judgeth fit ( in which we are not one to judge another ) notwithstanding I cannot think that man takes such care of himself as he ought, or is duly cautious of indisposing his heart for his duty, who can constantly suffer all this time, between morning and evening service, to pass over with him without any thing of devotion, either in his privacy or family, or just as the same time passeth over every day. This

I.

I say, cannot be to sanctifie the day, because not to sepearate it from common, and to use it to distinct ends. Part. III.  
Chap. 8.

Soon therefore after dinner ended amongst all the family, it is meet that I call the younger sort and set them to the learning their Catechism: and as to the Elder, if I suspect any of them to be apt to trifle away their time, let them be kept in my presence; and if all of them be able, let them read by course somewhat out of the Scripture, or, some plain and honest book; if all be not, then such as can.

## SECT. VII.

### *Of resorting to Evening service.*

**W**Hen it is now almost time to resort to Evening service let all be called together to the end that all may orderly repair with me to the publick Assembly. And it may not be amiss (but right edifying) if some one person read a Psalm suitable

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suitable to the present undertaking of going to worship God (such as is the lxxxiv. or the cxix. one or two parts of it being taken at a time, as occasion or time shall serve) to which reading all ought reverently to attend. And this being done, let the same rules and directions, which were given touching going to Church in the morning, be observed in the Evening, and all as before resort to the publick worship. Which if they do, I and my family are now a second time attentively and reverently placed before God in his House of Prayer; where my carriage ought to be the same, as is before directed to. And surely unless I and my house appear thus the second time before God, I cannot account my self duly to sanctifie the Lords day, I have done it only by halves. The Church was never in a settled condition, but it had the Evening as well as the Morning sacrifice; *Vespers* as well as *Matins*.

If therefore any thing should so fall

fall out, that I or mine are hindred from the second part of the publick duties of the day, it ought to be my grief and sorrow, *Psam. 42. 4.*

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Chap. 8.

## SECT. VIII.

*Of the duties after return from Evening service.*

**M**Y departure from the Church and my *retirement* as soon as I come home for about a quarter of an hour, or as I see occasion, should be after the same sort, as in the former part of the day. Which being done, it will be expedient to come amongst my people, and see that all things are wisely ordered, that so some time before night, the devotions of the family may be performed. In the mean time, both I my self, and as many of the family as can be spared from necessary services, are free to our private devotions. Only if there are any triflers, let them and the younger sort be dealt with, as after dinner, that is, kept, where

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where the people most commonly sit, reading and attending to the Word of God; at least for some certain space. Let them not spend their time as they do ordinarily: *for the Lords day should look with another face than common days all the day long.*

This care being taken of my self and family, I see not but my Christian liberty permits me any honest refreshment, such as may be walking forth in my Garden, in the fields or open air. Only let me observe these cautions. 1. That my walk be some such as *Isaac's Evening walk* was, that my Meditations be good. Unquestionably I shall not find the fields an unfit place for good thoughts: There are many in the world, whom the very breathing the fresh air, the beholding the glorious light of Heaven, the passing clouds, the verdant earth, and smiling face of all things, transports into a rapture of devotion, affects very much with the admiration of the Creator  
of

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of all things, makes too to long for the time, when either they shall ascend above them all, or see them pass away, and dwell ever with their God, beholding his face without any such interpositions. And with much advantage may a man spend an hour thus, mixing often prayers or ejaculations with these his thoughts.

2. Another caution I should observe is, That I return so early, as that neither my Devotions in my Closet nor in my family, may be omitted. And truly most convenient will it be, that my own private devotions ( which being that I look on my self bound to on other days, I cannot this day omit ) be performed before the supper which I take : for then shall I be freshest then will what I have learnt that day be better in my memory, than after the diversions which my supper and company may cause. Besides that, the performance of them will have fixed and prepared my spirit against any such diversions, and for the performance

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performance of devotion in the family. Which practice too on other evenings may not be improper, but possibly, by reason of my constitution, convenient if not necessary.

Now as to what I am this evening to perform in my Closet, it is the same, for the most part, as at other times. My course of reading must be the same: only if so be that I see fit, the portion which I read larger. My Meditations, (besides what is every days task) upon what I read, may take in a view of my carriage that day; an enquiry what I have learnt; a considering so as to affect my self with it; and a setting down a resolution to endeavour in all my ways a practice of it. My prayers may take in some new Confessions, [ of my *unprofitableness, hard heartedness, unsettledness* ] petitions ( for pardon, memory to retain, and grace to perform what I have learned ) Thanksgivings ( for any quickenings of heart, resolution of holiness, any instruction, or improvement

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Provement of my Christian knowledge, &c. ) all suitable to what in my Meditations I have found mine estate to be : for the inserting or putting in of which, I shall easily find in my usual prayers fit places.

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My Closet devotions being thus performed, time it will now be for me and my family to take what Evening meal we use : which being done in some convenient time before we go to bed ( which ought not for many reasons to be too late ) If I am a pious Christian I cannot but look upon my self bound to shut up the day in my family with some such devotions as I begun it with. Touching which some directions have been already given, as to Reading and Prayer : and it is only to be added that I am to make some inquiry severally into those, who are under my charge, touching their improvements that day ; to help out and instruct the ignorant ; to rebuke, and that shortly, the negligent and heedless ; to encourage



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rage the careful as my Christian discretion shall see meet: the properest place for which, will be either before the prayers begin, or just after the reading of the Scriptures, so that the family may be dismissed and the day ended with prayers.

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PART.

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PART IV.

Of most solemn Retirement into the Closet for Humiliation.

CHAP. I.

*An Account of what it is to be treated of, particularly in this part.*

**M**Y most solemn retirement into my Closet, and that for which the place is most principally designed, is upon such days or times, which I set apart to humble my

Part. III. my self for my sins before God, by  
 Chap. I. *Fasting, and Prayer, and Mourning,*  
 and all *acts of Contrition.*

And truly if the ordinary Fasting days of the Church were duly by all observed, all that our present design would seem to call for, were, to deliver the manner of their private observation, that is, the particular duties to be on them performed. But forasmuch as most men keep them ordinarily no otherwise, than by a little change of diet, taking perhaps fish, &c. for flesh, and feeding, neither more sparingly, nor much less deliciously, than they do on other days, and so make them indeed no fasting days, we must consider both of the *Setting* apart of days for private fasting, and of their *Observation* when set apart. But first of all it will be necessary to spend a few thoughts upon the nature and ends of *Fasting*.

## CHAP. II.

*Of the Nature and Ends  
of Fasting.*

BY Fasting here is meant a Religious abstaining from our lawful food. Lawful food at present we will account that, which, according to the common practice of sober and discreet persons of our rank and quality, is neither too much nor too dainty for us. For we may account a man intemperate in his feeding, as well by being too delicate and fine, and eating constantly on things which are fit chiefly for persons above his degree, as by eating overmuch. Now not all abstaining from this my lawful food is that *Fasting*, which is here intended: for I may abstain for my healths sake, or through business, or (by some accidents) upon necessity,

L and

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and all ( it may very well be ) without sin, and yet not fast as fasting signifies a duty, or an act acceptable to God : but it must be a Religious abstaining, which I can duly call Fasting, as at present that name is used : Now it will be best discerned to be *Religious*, ( 1. ) by the *ends* which I design to my self therein, and ( 2. ) by my *employment* of my self upon such my fasting days.

See Dr.  
*Hammond*  
Pract.  
Catech.  
Lib. 3.  
Sect. 3.

First, as to the ends and designs of him who abstains or fasts Religiously ; the chief of them are

1. Devotion, or the performance of Religious exercises : when I fast, that I may have more leisure and be fresher for *Reading, Meditation, and Prayer.*

2. Mortification : when I fast to tame my flesh, to *keep under* and *beat down* my body, that it may be in due obedience to the commands of God and reason.

3. Liberality : when I fast to deal my bread unto the hungry, and either deprive my self or feed more slenderly

flenderly, that I may have the more Part. IV.  
wherewith to relieve others. Chap. 2.

4. Sympathising with the sufferings of others: when I fast out of a fellow feeling of the afflictions of Gods people, commiserating their condition, and, through an abundance of charity, desiring, as it were to partake with them in their sufferings.

5. Exercising my self to the obedience of Christs commands: when I fast out of self-denial, and (when I both would and could eat) by fasting, as by one particular act of obedience to that general command of denying my self, *exercise my self unto godliness.*

6. Diverting or removing Gods wrath, and expressing my sorrow and humiliation for sin: when Gods wrath either resting upon my country or friends, or self, or hanging over any of our heads, I fast and deprecate it, and beg pardon of all those evils, which have brought us into such misery and danger.

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Chap. 2.

2 Cor. 7.

11.

7. An holy revenge or punishment of my self: when having repented of some sin, for which I am holily angry with my self, I choose thus to punish and chastise my self for my former, ( it may be ) luxury, wantonness or the like.

When I say out of any of these intentions, or with these designs I abstain from my lawful meat, I then fast in the sense that fasting is now taken: for this is ( thus far ) Religiously to abstain; and no doubt, but such abstaining is acceptable unto God, if all be as right as my intentions, that is, if suitable *performances or devotions* be added, which is the second point constituting a Religious Fast, and touching which, rules will anon be considered, when the nature of fasting is a little further looked into, and it is evident that it is a duty, and no such needless matter as men usually seem to take it for, if we may judge of what they think by what they do.

CHAP.

## CHAP. III.

*That Fasting is a Christian Duty.*

NOW that none either suspicion touching its necessity or excuse for its neglect may be left, it will be expedient to consider what Evidence may be brought that Fasting is a Christian duty. And

1. Indeed there needeth little more to be urged for the proving it a duty, besides the recollection and summing up those excellent ends to which it serveth and conduceth. No doubt but to *humble* my self for my sins, to *pray earnestly* for pardon, and for *the turning away* of Gods *wrath* are duties, no doubt but to *keep under* my body and make it subject, to *relieve the poor*, to *sympathise* with the *afflictions of Joseph*, are duties: now to all these is fast-



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Chap. 3.

ing a means, and of some of them ( besides ) an expression. No doubt but to *deny myself*, and to take upon my self *an holy revenge* for my former extravagancies, are duties : Now of these is Fasting a part. It may therefore hence sufficiently be concluded a duty.

Mat. 6. 2,  
6, 15.  
compared

2. A further evidence of the same I take it to be, that *Fasting* is by our Saviour, in that Sermon of his upon the Mount, which delivers to us the sum of the Christian Law, or rule of Evangelical duties, ranked with *Prayer* and *Almes-giving* ; ( which are undoubted duties ) and rescued from the Pharisaical abuses of it, the true manner of it being insinuated : Inasmuch that it may be justly demanded, how comes it to stand in the Christian law ? to what end needed its practice to be vindicated from corruption, and asserted as it is by Christ, to its parity if it were not a Christian duty ? Besides

3. We find God in its season calling

ling for it; of old by his prophet *Joel* Part. IV.  
*Sanctify a Feast, call an Assembly,* Chap. 9.  
 which place though it intend a publick Fast, yet when the case shall be *Joel. 2. 15*  
 so with a private person, as the Prophet supposeth it with that people, it will by *Analogy*, and in reason hold of a private one. And it is evident our Saviour in *St. Matthew* spoke of those private Fasts, which every one is by him supposed to consecrate unto God. Who knows not that the *Afflicting of the soul* (touching which we meet with so many commands, and such frequent mention in the old Testament) doth mainly intend fasting? And as to the new Testament, further yet: though our Saviour once tels us, the season for his Disciples fasting was not then come, *while the Bridegroom was with them*, yet at the same *Mat. 9. 15.* time he tels us, its season would not be long to, *and then they should fast.*

4. Again, the constant sence of the world, and of all the Saints of

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God in all ages ( amongst whom by how much soever any have been more zealous, by so much the more hath he been in the exercise of fasting ) is an argument ( no whit contemptible ) of its being a duty. Not only the Saints under the Law fasted, and the Pharisee too twice a week, but the devout Christians have ever been to us ensamples hereof. And,

5. ( Which sets it off with more advantage ) we find not only the commendation of them for this practice, but the recompence of it with many signal blessings recorded in Scripture: which recompence God doth not use to give to will-worship. Thus we find *Anna* commended for her continuing in the Temple day and night, *serving God* Luk. 2. 36. *with Fastings and Prayers*. And it is observeable, that *fasting* is there reckoned as one part of her *serving God*. That blessed vision, which Act. 10. led *Cornelius* to the knowledge of Christ was vouchsafed to him upon a day

a day when he had fasted till about the ninth hour ( which is with us three a clock ) and then too we find him not at meat, but prayer.

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All which cannot but enforce that though it be not *always* and indispensably a duty, as is Faith, Repentance, Charity, and such others; yet is it as far a duty, as any thing can be that is not required absolutely and for it self; and that therefore whensoever there is occasion for it ( and no Christian can be long without due occasions requiring it ) it is to be performed; and being so, if it should be performed in manner of a free-will offering, or oftner than in strictness the Christian might seem to have need of it, yet if it be done as it should be, it is likely to be acceptable to God.

But this makes it seasonable to enquire how often a Christian is to fast.

## CHAP. IV.

*How often a Christian is  
to Fast.*

**I**N answer whereunto it must be said, that no certain or constant rule, as to all persons can or may be given herein: nor will the times of fasting be the same to all, some men having more *need*, others less (if not need yet) *opportunity*. We are assured by the ends to which it serves, that many mens particular conditions (which haply leave them none other means to mortifie the flesh but this) make it a duty very necessary for them to be much in. On the other side, those who ever feed sparingly and temperately, and have an evener constitution, less inclined to carnality and inordinate affections, than have other men, seem to have least need of this taming discipline. And those whose labours  
are

are daily and hard, and whose life is  
servile, many times neither have so  
much need; nor so much oppor-  
tunity of fasting, as have those whose  
life is easier. Yet forasmuch as it is  
(according to what hath been above  
insinuated) a piece of *Afflicting a  
mans soul*, and so a necessary piece  
of contrition and repentance (which  
hath commonly somewhat of *indig-  
nation* against a mans self in it) there  
is none who can think himself whol-  
ly dispensed with for it, or to have  
no need at all of it. But I say every  
mans conscience and Christian dis-  
cretion must in the fear of God set  
to himself the rule, how often he is  
to fast: for that every one best  
knows his own needs, and it would  
be very sinful in some not to use  
more strict and oftner fastings than  
others; and some on the contrary  
must be very injurious to them-  
selves, should they use so much  
fasting as others (if they duly con-  
sider their leisure and condition)  
cannot but think themselves in duty  
bound

Part. IV.

Chap. 4.

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Chap. 4.

bound to. This is the sum of what in general may be positively determined. Yet it is worthy our consideration, and may be a guide to particular persons to remember.

First, that it is a practice of very great antiquity to *fast twice a week* and was in use as is evident before our Saviours days, and by him not censured in the Pharisee upon any other account, than because he was proud and conceited of it, using to reflect upon it in ostentation of his own holiness, and scorn of others. And it is a very worthy note of St. *Chrysostoms*, that we should only *avoid the Pharisees pride, but not neglect his performances*, as on the other side, *forsake the Publicans sins, but retain his humility*. There is also a constitution, which although perhaps it pretend to more authority and antiquity than it ought, yet must be acknowledged to be ancient and not unreasonable, that we should fast *Wedensdays* and *Fri-days*

days because on the one the Lord was betrayed, and on the other crucified: and it is beyond controverſie that the primitive Chriſtians uſed to have their ſolemn aſſemblies upon thoſe days, not much leſs conſtant than upon the Lords days.

Part. IV.  
Chap. 4.  
Conſtitut.  
a Clem.  
Roman.  
colleſt.  
Lib. 5.  
Cap. 15.

Secondly, that if this courſe be not always to be uſed ( which yet I know not what ſhould hinder, except a man want leiſure ) yet at certain ſeaſons, as in *Lent* and *Ember weeks*, the commands and cuſtom of the Church will engage me to as much as this amounts to, if not to more. And he to whom the commands of our preſent, and continued practice of the Catholick Church in devotionals ſignifie nothing, is ſurely a man of a ſtrange humourous ſanctity.

Laſtly, it is out of queſtion that there is no Chriſtian can walk ſtrictly and keep a good conſcience towards God and man, who hath not his ſolemn ſet days for the performing that great and weighty duty of humi-

Dr. Hammonds.  
Pract.  
Catech.  
Lib. 3.



*humiliation, in calling himself to an account for all his ways, and confessing his sins more particularly before God: and those days should not be too slow in their returns [that is too seldom] lest his soul should be too deep in arrears [that is, lest there should be such a long score of his sins unrepented of, that he think it an infinite and endless work to repent of them] and so be loath to come to account at all. It is very reasonable therefore for every man and woman of any tolerable leisure to set a part one day in a week for this purpose, or if the whole day, or any other part of it may not be spared from the business of his calling, yet the dinner time that day may be borrowed from eating, and thus more usefully employed without disturbance to the affairs or injury to the health of any ordinary person. I do not say that this day ought always to be one and the same: it may be one week one day, and the next another, according as my occasions will best bear: nay even after*

after I have appointed it, upon unexpected events, it may undoubtedly be altered without sin, but wholly neglected it cannot be without a sinful omission, except upon some urgent or more than ordinary business.

## CHAP. V.

### *Of the Preparatory acts for Private Fasting days.*

THE worship of God is ever best celebrated, when some kind of preparation is made for it: It will be meet therefore that somewhat I do by way of preparation for my private fasts.

And one piece of preparation as well for these days as for the Lords day it self (though indeed somewhat remote, or assar off) it will be, to be diligent other days in my calling, and well to husband both my  
time

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Chap. 5.

time and estate. For if he, who hath not by his six days labour made such provision for himself and his, as that he may be without care of providing upon the seventh day, will scarce rest that seventh day unto God without distraction (as seems to be suggested to us by those words [*Six days shalt thou labour*] being put into the fourth Commandment) much less he will be able to allow himself constantly more time in a week than a seventh day comes to, to wit some part of every day, and a considerable part besides of one of the six days (which is to be his fast) to the service of God. I would therefore have every man not to incumber himself in this world more than he needs must. We should learn to know when we have enough, and allow our selves some part of our time to enjoy as well as all to get. But this is preparation very far off.

The first act of more immediate preparation for these my fasting days

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days will be, prudently to contrive, upon foresight and consideration of my weeks business, what day or days they are, in which I can best spare time for this work: and those days, or that day will be the fittest to be pitched upon, in which I may the most freely converse with God without the disturbance, which much business necessarily brings. Besides the time spent in my ordinary course of devotions, which are not upon my fasts to be omitted, under pretence of making amends for them, or running them up into my Penitentiary performances. I cannot upon those days when I allow least, allow less than two hours, and upwards, to the peculiar work of my Fasts. So much time therefore, at the least, I say, I must resolve such a day to devote.

Which being resolved upon, it will be fit (as a second act of my more immediate preparation) in the devotions of the evening before, to spend a petition or two in my prayers

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ers to God, that he would by his gracious Spirit *prepare* me for the work which I intend the next day, *softning* my heart, and *giving me to understand my errors*, that I may duly lament them and truly amend them; which Petitions I may easily see a fit place to insert in my prayers. And the day being come, unto my morning devotions it will be expedient to add some such short prayer, as this which follows.

**O** Lord, who seest the purposes of all hearts, and hast been privy to the intentions of thy servant touching calling himself this day to an account of his wayes, and humbling himself before thee for all his transgressions; Be thou in mercy present to me by the preventings and assistance of thy grace, that I may, with a true heart and con-

contrite spirit, perform what I intend. Grant that no worldly cares or business may so take off my mind from thee, but that I may be able forthwith to return, and without distraction to imploy my whole soul in my designed devotions; to the glory of thy Name, my own amendment and comfort here, and everlasting blessedness hereafter, in and through thy Son Jesus Christ my Lord.  
*Amen.*

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And lastly, my morning devotions being thus finished, until the time come that I have resolved to retire, I must endeavour to converse, and behave my self in my ordinary affairs, so warily as that nothing may discompose, disorder, or disturb me; no worldly design too much possess my thoughts, according as above I have prayed.

CHAP.

## CHAP. VI.

*The order of Humiliation or Penitentiary Devotions.*

## SECT. I.

*The entrance unto the work.*

**T**Hat time being now come, which I appointed to spend with God in my Closet, I must religiously observe mine appointment : For albeit the resolve was only private, and never proceeded without my own breast or Closet, yet hath God taken notice of it, and it stands on record in his omniscience; and by breaking these my private and (as haply I may judge) less material resolutions, I shall soon learn to break my word and vows too in other matters, both with God and man.

Coming

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Coming therefore at my time appointed into my Closet, I reverently kneel down before God, and having the sence of his presence, and all-seeing eye upon mine heart, humbly begin in some such short prayer, as is this which follows.

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I Am come, O Lord, into thy presence, upon work, which no one hath more need to do than my self, to consider my ways, and repent of my sins, and turn to thee. But I have an hard heart, not apt to relent; and dry eyes, such, at least, which seldom shed tears for my sins. O that thou wouldst bow the Heavens, and come down, and melt my soul in such godly sorrow, which might work repentance not to be repented of. Open mine eyes and help me to see into mine heart: bring  
my



## A Method for

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my sins to my remembrance, and set them in order before me, that an holy shame and confusion may cover my face for them, and thou beholding my contrition mayst accept it, and both pardon me, and assist me hereafter by thy grace, that I may live more *godly, righteously, and soberly* in this present world, and attain unto blessedness with thy self in the world to come, through the merits of Christ Jesus my Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

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SECT.

## SECT. II.

*Of Reading, so as to fit my self for  
Self-examination.*

SOME such supplication being with all my heart made unto God, I may haply find it not to be always the best course forthwith to fall upon the examination of my self: For, for this I shall be the fitter when awakened and made more attentive to my self by some other exercise. It may be proper therefore to spend an hour in the reading some honest practical Book, which treateth severally of those duties which we owe both to God, others and our selves, to wit, upon that particular Book, which knowing to be very good, I have chosen and singled out to my self to read and practice, such as are, the never enough commended Doctor *Hammonds Practical Catechism*, or ( if that seem to any too difficult ) that  
no

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no less excellent than plain and truly Learned Book, *The whole Duty of Man*, (for the Author of which, our whole Church owes praises unto God, and if he be yet alive, prayers.) And in my reading hereof, I must endeavour to read :

*First*, with understanding : so that it is not so much the repeating to my self the words, as considering and digesting the substance of them, which I must account reading of them. I must therefore read and study the Book as Scholars do their Books ; and if there be any material thing which I do not understand, mark it, so that I may inform my self, by advising with some more able person than my self.

*Secondly*, I must read all with application to my self, remembering that all this concerns me, and endeavouring to see how it concerns me ; whether I perform the duty I read of as I should, or how I neglect it, &c.

By this means, taking upon every  
of

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of my fasting days a part, my Book will in convenient season be read over: which when it is, it must not be thrown aside, but read through again and again, with the same diligence till I am perfect in it. Nor ought the third or fourth reading of a good profitable and practical Treatise, to be tedious or unpleasant to me: for that Christian duties are not new, but have been, and always will be the same, and multitude of Books do but confound plain heads. All wise men know, that to make a mans self master of one good Book is better than to have slightly read an hundred, which were not either thoroughly understood or digested. To keep therefore thus to one good Book, which may instruct me of the sum of my Christian duty, till I have fully made it mine own, is my most edifying course.

M

SECT.

## SECT. III.

*Of Self-examination, and the  
view of our life.*

1. Of sins.

**T**His my Exercise of reading being over, it will be seasonable now to fall to the examination of my self touching my *sins*. And here I shall find a very good help of the former work of reading, especially after some considerable use of it, when I am once come to know my several duties: for certain it is, *No man can see what he hath done amiss, what he hath left undone* (which two heads, Of *Omission* and *Commission*, contain under them all actual sins) till he seeth what he should have done. Now this duty of self examination, a man may be supposed either to be a stranger in, and little to have practised, or else to have been much in it, and to be thoroughly versed in his heart and life.

He who is a stranger to it, hath  
unqu-

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unquestionably more work to do than the other. That he may therefore do his business throughly he must begin with those very first years which he can remember, and trace sin from his infancy, through his youth, to his riper and present years. He must see what Devil first entred him, I mean, what sins first seized him, how they have grown up and continued with him: Singularly useful in this case will be those Heads of Self-examination, in that admirable honest book, *The whole Duty of Man*, in the devotional part annext thereto, pag. 425. the use and application of which is also shewed at the end of those heads. But this will be too long a work for an hour or two. Such a person therefore had need to set apart whole days for this purpose, till he hath a little recovered himself, and set his accounts streighter with God. Yet must he not, while he is enquiring after unknown or forgotten sins, neglect to repent of his fresher

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and known transgressions. If therefore so it is, that for the present he cannot recollect himself, and make a diligent search into the whole course of his life, yet must he confess and bewail what he knows of himself, and together acknowledge how much he is in arrears, which he hath forgotten, or at present doth not see, and for all humbly beg mercy. But this not so, as wholly to put off further enquiry: but having this Fast examined himself touching so many years or months (according as his life finds his thoughts work) upon his next Fast to proceed farther, and so on the next still farther, till he come home to his present age. Now in this sifting of my life, if I can, it will be very useful to me, and much further a distinct Repentance, to use my Pen, and through each year set down my sins: By this means I shall be able much better to consider them, and so, both know more of my self, and of the deceitful ways, which sin hath to gain upon me.

And

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And because as I owe to God *Part. IV.*  
*Confession* and repentance of my *Chap. 6.*  
*sins*, so I owe also acknowledgment  
and *thanks* for his *Mercies*, therefore  
in this enquiry, it will be necessary  
to observe Gods remarkable Mer-  
cies and deliverances to me, record-  
ing these also year by year, as my  
*sins*.

2. Of  
Blessings.

Thus will the sight of his Mercies  
aggravate my sins, and encrease my  
repentance; and the sight of my sins,  
parallel with his mercies, commend  
his goodness and inhance my thank-  
fulness, both which are singular be-  
nefits.

And because even afflictions have  
their use, and are to be accounted  
for; if therefore I find any consi-  
derable adversity or cross with which  
God hath exercised me, this also is  
to be registred as the former. If it  
did me good, I owe to God *thanks*  
for it: if not, I owe *repentance* for  
being incorrigible.

3. Of Af-  
flictions.

Being thus come to my present  
time, it will become me not to run

M 3

in



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in arrears again, but every Fast day still to make my accounts even; and to that purpose to take care, as aforesaid, that these my Fasts be not too seldom.

Supposing therefore, that I am a person who have so far practised self-examination, as that I have formerly taken account of all my life, That, which I shall have chiefly to enquire into, upon each return of these my fasting days, will be,

*First*, what new sins or *commitments* I have been guilty of since my last day of accounting.

*Secondly*, What *neglects*: especially, if I have formerly made any vows or new engagements to God, how I have observed or slighted them.

*Thirdly*, In what posture or *temper my heart* hath continued, and at present is; whether soft, tender, penitent and in awe of God; or whether dull, careless, insensible, or otherwise out of order and prone to its old lusts.

Lastly,

Lastly, How the providences of God have carried towards me si- Part. IV.  
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thence; what *mercies* received, what *afflictions* sent upon me, and what hath been *my carriage* answerably. These heads of examination if I cannot remember, I must here turn to, and put the question to my self as to every point particularly. And whatever I find more remarkable, let it be registred in mine Accomptal (so I call that Paper-book in which I use to keep account of my life and spiritual state) whereof, as is abovesaid, I shall find singular advantage in my succeeding time.

#### SECT. IV.

*Of the Endeavour of Godly sorrow,  
How to work our selves to it.*

SIN is not such a thing, the knowledge of which is desirable for it self, but only in order to somewhat else, which it is apt to beget, to wit,

M 4

Godly

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*Godly sorrow and repentance.* My sins therefore being thus known, I am to set my self about the sorrowing for them, and repenting of them.

And to godly sorrow the readiest course will be, more fully to fix my thoughts upon the sins, of which in my examination of my self I have found my self guilty, to look upon them, so as that *mine eye may affect my heart*, my attent consideration of them may move and grieve me, as it ought. To this purpose I am to consider particularly;

*First*, The foulness of my particular sins in themselves and in their own nature, how vile they make me, how unable I should be to look men in the face, if they knew all these unworthy acts by me, which I do of my self, and God far better than my self: how vile therefore must they needs render me in his holy Eye.

*Secondly*, The several Aggravations which they admit; the chief of which, and those which are aptest to

See the  
whole  
Duty of  
Man, pag.  
71, 72,  
&c.

to affect me, I may take to be those which follow. Part. IV.  
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1. Against how great *light* and how clear *knowledge* of Gods will I have sinned. I knew such and such actions to be, sinful, when yet I ventured upon them.

2. Against how many *checks of conscience* I committed them. Did not my own heart at that very instant smite me, telling me of the wrath of God and eternal flames belonging to those who do such things;

3. Against how many *engagements and obligations* to the contrary have I sinned. 1. My own vows and covenant both in baptism and since. 2. Gods mercies and forbearance, which should have invited and lead me to repentance. 3. Gods judgments and heavy hand many times upon me, which should have taught me righteousness. 4. Had I no hinderances in the way, which I broke through? It may be God's holy providence cast somewhat in,

which did a while retard my commission of the sin, and if I had not been desperately bent upon it, might have diverted me, and dashed the temptation. All these were engagements to the contrary, and have not I broke through many of them?

Was not I the *tempter* and Devil to my self in them? Did not I set my self on work, without Satans incitation of me thereto?

Nay, 5. Besides that I have committed them upon mine own motion did I not commit them also upon *deliberation* and advice? This must argue either much unbelief, or a strange contempt of God and judgement.

6. Is this the first time of the commission of this or that sin, or is it not now by *frequent iteration* become *customary*, habitual, and almost a *second nature* to me? And I hereby more a child of wrath than I was born?

7. Whether or no have not many of my sins been *publickly dishonourable* to God, and scandalous to my Christian

Christian profession? Hath not mine example, if not mine enticements, drawn in others to the same sin, or driven others out of conceit with Religion? Wretched man that I am! that I should so hold[perhaps teach] the faith as to make Infidels.

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Chap. 6.

Lastly, Something of grievousness the *circumstances of time and place*, &c. may add thereto, which ought not to be overlooked.

If the consideration of this the foulness and grievousness of my sins move not, or too lightly touch mine heart, let me in the third and last place seriously consider, what I have incurr'd and merited by my sins. Certain it is, God is for them displeased with me: I am out of his favour, and when I look up to him, I can expect nothing but his wrath and curse; wrath and all its bitter effects upon my *body* in sickness, pains, and loathsome maladies; upon my *soul* in horror of mind and inquietude and torments of conscience; upon mine *estate* in disappointments, losses, and ruins;

ruins; upon my *Relations*, in making them griefs and burdens to me; upon my *Name*, in infamy & reproaches; nay, upon my very *Prayers*, in having them become an abomination before God. In a word, Gods wrath and curse in all I have and all I do, is the only portion my sins have made mine in this present world, and in that future and eternal world judgment without mercy, horror and the gnawing worm, and torment everlasting, so pure, so exquisite as not to admit of so much refreshment as what a drop of water would give to a scorched tongue. This is the wages due to my sins, and which, except God in great mercy divert it, will infallibly befall me: & divert it he will not, except upon my sincere and hearty repentance, the thing which I have in present consideration, & with all my soul must endeavour, as I tender everlasting bliss, & the escaping everlasting torments.

Through such heads as these should I trace my sins, especially those

those of them, which are most gross: and in my Meditations dwell so upon those considerations, as may if possible, move my sorrow, at least breed an utter aversion of the sin and a loathing of my self for it; And if it be so, that I cannot shed tears, and really mourn over my sins, yet if I can find in my self, a through displeasure with my self for sin, and an hatred of it, together with an earnest desire to be freed from the habit and power of the sin, as well as from the guilt of it, this I may conclude to be a sorrow of mind, and ought therefore to cherish in my soul.

## SECT. V.

*Of Repentance, which is the effect of godly sorrow, its true nature and way of practice.*

THE Apostle saith, *Godly sorrow* 2 Cor. 7. *worketh repentance, which need* 10. *not to be repented of.* Now that repentance may seem to consist of two things. Of a full purpose of heart to forsake



forſake ſin, which is a change of mind; and of *heartly endeavours* againſt it, which is a change of life.

*First*, I ſay, I may not think I have repented of my ſin, till I have taken up a *full purpoſe* and reſolution of mind againſt it for the future. As long as there is in me any intention of returning to it again, I am an impenitent wretch. Now ſuch purpoſe and reſolution the foregoing conſideration of my ſin is apt to beget: and therefore by laying ſuch thoughts truly home unto mine heart, by employing my mind much on them, I ought to endeavour to work my ſelf up to ſuch reſolution, and never to ſit down contented, or think my ſelf penitent till I am ſo wrought upon. I ſhall not much need to be minded, that during ſuch endeavours I ought to intermix with my meditations, frequent petitions to Almighty God, whoſe Grace only it is, which is ſufficient for me for the turning of my heart from ſin.

Now

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Now purposes and resolutions are rotten, except endeavours to fulfil them follow. This therefore is the second part of repentance, that, as I have *resolved*, so I *endeavour* against sin.

And this *endeavour* against sin seems to have two parts, the one of which may best be acted in my Closet, the other must be acted any where and every where.

The first part of the endeavour against sin is, to do what we can to *mortifie the habit*, that is, the inclination, readiness, and customary proneness, which we have to the sin, which is to be forsaken. And that must be done,

1. By *considering* with my self what *means*, or *remedies*, I can find out against that sin. Certain it is, *the more I can restrain or keep back my self from the actual commission or doing of any sin, the more will the power of that sin decay in me, the less inclined shall I be thereto.* Wherefore if I cannot at the first  
root.

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root out the habit, or overcome that miserable inclinedness, which I find thereto, yet let me endeavour to find out such means, which may keep me from the acting the sin, and, I say, that customary proneness unto the sin will by the grace of God decay.

Now in general it will be a true and proper *Remedy* against any sin to consider the occasions or inducements, which chiefly lead me thereunto, and to provide as well as I can against them.

Whether or no is it a sin which is deeply rooted in my nature and constitution? or whether or no is it such an one, which by my way of living, converse and custom, I have settled in my self? If it be of the latter sort, the breaking my self of that custom, the altering, as far as is possible, such converse as hath brought me into it, is a very good remedy against it. But if it be a sin innate, and after a sort planted in my very make and complexion, it is more

more difficult to subdue: But the way will be, ( 1. ) To take such course with my self, as that for the future I may keep my self from the acting of it as much as may be; that is, first, to abstain from and provide against all such occasions which have or may blow up the flame of my inbred lusts. And then, ( 2. ) If *fasting*, *watching*, or any such usage of my body will abate the strength of that particular lust, to practise it diligently: And further, ( 3. ) To make it a constant petition in my daily prayers to God, that he by that Spirit, by which he is able to subdue all things unto himself, would mortifie in me the affection and lust, which I have after that sin. And by persevering in such course, no doubt but at length, through the divine Grace, I shall overcome it. These *means* therefore having *consulted* of ( attending to my particular sin, ) the next step which I am to take in the mortifying of it is :

2. To *resolve* there before God,  
*diligently*

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*diligently to use those means*, which I have particularly consulted of, and so forthwith to *order and contrive all my affairs* (as far as in me lies) that I may without any partiality use them all, according to the best of my skill, and in the most effectual manner that I know.

The second part of the *endeavour* against sin (which will not be so much the work of my Closet, as of my life) is *diligence in the using of these means* (which I have thus considered of, found out and resolved upon) wherever I am, and whensoever I have opportunity.

Now that I may so do, it will very much help, if I write down these resolutions before God in my privacy, which I am to do in mine *Accountal*; where also I am to record every days fasting, and the issue thereof, what I found new in mine estate, what I resolved on, what means I considered of against such and such sins. We find, they not only made a *Covenant*, but put it in *writing*,

*writing, and sealed it before the Lord* Part. IV.  
in their solemn Fast. *Nehem. 9. 38.* Chap. 6.

This will be one way to secure me against being slighty in my Penitentials: and it may besides much both confirm and quicken me in my execution of these my resolves, to read them over written by my own hand before God in private.

And being thus registred, it will be good for me to be often (when I come into my Closet about my devotions and examine my self) looking on and reading them over, lest forgetfulness should betray me into the breach of them.

## SECT. VI.

*An exemplification of the former Rules in two sins.*

**N**OW to the end that this most necessary practice may be as plain as possible, it may haply conduce to set down some particular examples, in which those general rules

rules may appear practised. And forasmuch as it was before said, that all sins, of which we shall find our selves frequently guilty, are either such which are *rooted in our particular complexion* and so may especially be called, *our iniquities*) or such which by *some outward occasion* (as converse or manner of living) we *fall into*, one instance shall be of such a sin, which is commonly too too much rooted in mens natures or particular *Crafes*, to wit *Uncleanness*; the other in such an one, which though haply a man may be naturally inclined to, yet commonly may be more truly referred to the head of contracted than of in-born evils, and that is, *Trifling away our time*.

First Then, suppose that upon examination of my self, one sin, whereof I find my self guilty, is *Uncleanness*; and this I find diversly to have run through a great part of my life. Touching this, certain it is, that I repent not of it as I should, if I set not my self to root it out. Wherefore, accord-

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according to the rules laid down, Part. IV.  
Chap. 6.  
thus proceed.

Being come now so far in my devotions upon my Fast day as to Meditation, and having in my Meditations chiefly employed my thoughts upon my self, whereby I have found my self guilty of this sin, I set upon the repenting of it. To that purpose I endeavour to sorrow for it. I therefore consider, *first*, how grievous a sin that is in it self. And in this case it may be, that good practical book which I have chosen to my self to read and study, may much help me, and discover to me the grievousness of it in its own nature. This being done, I consider how grievous my commillion of it is: what particular aggravations all my actions of this kind admit. Here I open this my book, and examine it by those aggravating particulars mentioned: Further, I consider the evil it hath brought, and may bring upon me; wrath here, and wrath to come. All which cordially employing Sec. 4.  
ing



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Chap. 6.

ing my thoughts upon, I endeavour to affect my soul therewith, and to work in my self a loathing of such courses: This sorrow will work repentance, to wit, First a resolution against what I loath, and then an endeavour against it, as well by consulting remedies and means against it, as by putting my self into a way of using such means, of which particular rules have been just now given. And the result of my Humiliation thus far, I, as briefly as I can, register in mine Accomptal, in some such sort as this.

An. Dom. — Januar. — Fasted:  
*I found my self guilty of Uncleanness.  
This I considered to be in it self a very  
grievous sin.*

1. *It defiles my very body; makes  
me loathsom.*

2. *It debaseth and dulls my soul.*

3. *It is that which nature it self is  
ashamed of.*

4. *God most perfectly hates it, and  
therefore when he expresseth the vilest  
sins,*

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sins, calls them *Whoredom*. Eze. 16. 15. Part. IV.

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5. It is one of those sins which God seldom suffers to escape unpunished here.

6. I shall never be able to like my self, or have any inward content in my self while I practise it.

7. Perseverance in it will undoubtedly destroy my body and health as well as soul.

[Each of these, and more than these, as God shall be pleased to assist me in my Meditations I am supposed to have attently considered.]

My particular commissions in this case have the following aggravations. They have been done.

1. Knowingly. 2. [as I find it with See Sect. 4.]
3. Against my self, possibly against checks of conscience.]
4. Spontaneously.
5. Deliberately in such and such cases.
6. Frequently, and thus long, &c.

Whereupon, most humbly begging pardon of God, I resolved with all my might to endeavour against it. To that purpose I considered of those means against it.

1. Spare

1. Spare diet : frequent fasting :  
avoiding high meats.

2. Spare sleeping : not lying down  
till sleep compel me, rising early, or at  
least as soon as sleep leaves me.

3. Hard usage of my body : lying  
hard, using prostrations, or tiring po-  
stures in my prayers, &c.

4. Praying often, and much conver-  
sing with God in holy duties, which  
will make me ashamed of such carnal  
delights and sordid enjoyments.

5. Avoiding light company, light  
discourse, gesture, looks, &c.

6. Considering death, and that in  
its pomp and terribleness : looking much  
on Sceletons, dead mens skulls, bones,  
or contemplating consumptive and gash-  
ly visages.

7. Not venturing my self on any op-  
portunities or temptation to it.

These I then resolved to practise, and  
will therefore frequently read over.  
Amen, Lord, thy grace !

But it may be, this is not my sin :  
however, it will teach me how to  
deal

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deal in humbling my self for that which is. Suppose then I find my self guilty of *trifling away my time*. There is no repenting hereof without amendment: But what course may I take to be truly penitent for it?

Part. IV.  
Chap. 6.

The answer is: I must proceed as before. *Meditating, Resolving, Consulting*, and by all means *Confirming* my self against it. And the result of what I am to register in my account, may be thus.

[ *Such a day fasted* ] I found my self guilty of *trifling away my time*. I considered the *grievousness thereof*.

1. This is truly *idleness*, what name soever else I give it. For *idleness* is not the doing nothing, but the not doing what I should when I should. Now *idleness* is undoubtedly a *grievous sin*, as having not only its own guilt in it, but the guilt of many more sins, which it occasioneth.

2. This is the *frustrating the end* of my being, as far as in me lies, a living

N

ing

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Chap. 6.

ing to no purpose : and that how unworthy is it of a reasonable creature !

3. I must needs be unprepared for Heaven, and my great accounts, while guilty hereof. Every hour stands on record in Gods omniscience : and I cannot it may be give account of three hours in a day.

4. How evidently do I ruine my self, not only as to the future, but as to this present world hereby. What might I do, and be, were I careful of my time !

Further for me to do this how grievous is it ?

1. I know it to be sinful. 2. When I have remembred my duties to be undone, I have yet neglected them, against the present warnings of my conscience. 3. How many ways have I been engaged against this. So much, so worthy a work to do, and so much of my time already spent, &c. [Easie it is hereby to see how I may proceed according to my particular state.]

These

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These Meditations being finished, Part. IV.  
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and, as briefly as I can, entered, it remains that I enter my resolution of endeavour against this sin as before : and then study meet remedies there- to. Now this sin not being always *natural* to them in whom it is found, but *adventitious*, it concerns me to consider, as before admonished, how I came to be guilty hereof, and to suit my remedies to those oc- casions.

1. It may be I *am busied about many things*, and so either neglect all, ( or what chiefly concerns me ) my proper duties. Perhaps I cannot endure that which should be my business, but am fickle, desultory, and rambling in mine employment, and though I am not much guilty of doing nothing, yet do I not do what I should : and this is undoubt- edly a piece of idleness, as above- said, for a man to neglect the busi- ness of the season and of his calling, and to be most taken up in things which least concern him. Now here

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the remedy will be to consider what it is that is my proper business: to put my work into a certain mould and order: and then to set my self a task daily, and engage my self (as well as I can) to so much of it, before I divert to any Eccentrical occupation, I mean to the busying my self in things, which do not properly concern me.

2. It may be I use to sit and talk away my time with friends and company: much goes in idle visits: I have a nature, which is too sociable, and when I meet with company to my mind, I know not how to deny my self of their society and discourse: and if I do not meet with such, I am apt to leave my business and go seek such. Here the remedy will be (partly the same with the former) prudently to proportion my time to my business: So much of my business have I resolved to do: that resolution must not be broken: so much time will that work take me up: so much, my devo-

devotions: wherefore I have but so much left for society: more therefore I must not take. If therefore I am lite into any acceptable company, it will become me often to consider, how goes the time? so much of my imposed task yet lies undone, &c.

3. It may be much of my time is spent in dulness, sitting still, &c. It may be my constitution is such that if I eat heartily, I am a great while unfit for my work, and so feeding freely lays upon me a kind of necessity of being idle. Here the remedy will be to resolve upon a sparer diet, to bridle mine appetite and eat less when I do eat; or if I cannot that, to eat seldomer, and to be at least but once a day unfit for my work: which time of unfitness, if I will well husband my time, I may best allow for society; it will be fit enough for that.

4. It may be vexations, anger, or giving way to passion many times indisposeth me for business. Here



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the remedy will be to watch against such disturbances, to endeavour meekness, patience, and the mortification of unruly affections.

5. It may be sollicitude about this world, thoughtfulness, cares take up many of mine hours: and then, mine head being full, I cannot call home my mind and fall to work: and when by my care I cannot find any expedient for what I sought, this breeds discontent, envy of other mens ease, happiness, freedom, &c. And seriously it is a great deal of time, which narrow fortunes thus steal away from some men. Here the remedy will be, study of content, frugality, wise husbanding mine estate, proportioning mine expences to my revenues. And so whatever I find to be the occasion of my loss or expence of time, let me study a futable remedy thereto, and register as well the occasion as its corresponding remedy. Let me then proceed to resolve upon the use of such remedies, and to order my particular

cular affairs in such sort that I may use them with the best advantage: and such resolutions let me always enter upon my *Accountal*, for the fastning them both upon mine heart and memory.

## SECT. VII.

*A further consideration of Repentance with reference to some particular sins.*

**R**epentance may seem to have been considered hitherto with a Relation to *habitual sins*, that is, such sins which either by nature or custom are rooted in the heart, and have begot in the soul a readiness, and inclinedness unto them. But surely, if I thoroughly understand the practice of it as it hath been hitherto described, I cannot be at a loss in what sort it ought to be exercised, when I find my self guilty of one *particular fall or sin*, the habit, or customary readiness to which, I

N. 4.                      have

have not yet contracted : for the substance of my work is still the same, viz.

Having in mine examination of my self found my self guilty, I am by attent consideration of that sin, whereof I am guilty, both in it self, and as it is mine, to endeavour to affect my heart therewith, so that I may truly sorrow for it : and though, it may be, I may truly conclude, that it hath not yet got fully a rooting within me, yet for as much as the first or second commission thereof hath in probability made me more inclined and easie thereto, than I was, when my mind, having been never much bent this way, was thitherwards more inflexible, therefore ought I to study and consult how for the future to secure and confirm my soul against any relapses or second backslidings : and after such consultation to resolve and engage my self with all possible strength against it.

One thing more, in case of sins  
com-

committed, or wrong done unto my neighbour, is yet requisite to the making my repentance sincere and through; and that is, that I forthwith upon sight of the sin, if possible, make *restitution*: otherwise that I make it as soon as I am able; and in case I am not likely to be able to make it, that I endeavour by acknowledgement of mine offence to seek for reconciliation unto him, whom I have so wronged. The necessity hereof may be concluded.

1. from what hath been above said, that repentance cannot be true, except there be an amendment. Now most evident it is, that while I suffer the wrong done yet to remain or continue, I am still injurious, and so consequently there is no amendment, and therefore no repentance. And, 2. the words of our Saviour most expressly enforce it. *If thou bring thy gift to the Altar, and there remember that thy Brother hath ought against thee, Leave there thy gift and first go and be reconciled to thy Brother,* Mat. 5. 22, 23.

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*ther, then come and offer thy gift,* God will accept of no sacrifice or duty whatsoever, at my hands in such a case, till I have reconciled my self, if possible. If any think this not to amount to restitution, 3. let him read *Levit. 6. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.* and *Numb. 5. 6, 7, 8.* where he shall find, besides the sin-offering to be brought to God in case of wrong done to others, it was enjoined, that the principal should be restored, with an addition of one fifth part thereto. Now if so it be, that I cannot find those nor the relations (as Children, Widows, Heirs) of those to whom I have been injurious, that I may make restitution, let me give and devote so much to the poor, as would do it, this is *to restore unto God* when I cannot to my brother: let me never lay up any thing wrongfully gotten, or that wherewith recompence should be made for wrong done, *it will eat as doth a Canker.* Besides I cannot, if by wrong I increase my store, ever have a quiet

con-

conscience, or reasonably expect the pardon of that my sin.

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Chap. 6.

Now the consideration how this *Restitution* or reconciliation may be made, and the resolution to make it, may be best done in my Closet: and such consultation and resolution deserves a place to be *registered* amongst my other penitential Devotions, upon the same reasons as they do.

These rules in my repentance if I have observed, though I cannot look upon any action of mine as compleat, yet I may have hope I have not herein been slighty, but that God through Christ Jesus will accept it.

SECT.

## SECT. VIII.

*Of that faith which is requisite in order to pardon of sin.*

See Dr.  
Ham.  
Pract.  
Catech.  
Lib. 1.  
Sect. 3.

**B**ESIDES Repentance, it is commonly said that God requireth *Faith* of us in order to the pardon of our sins, and it is most certain, if we understand *Faith* as we ought; But it is as certain, that people are ordinarily very much mistaken in the nature of Faith; as it is not unusual for us to be in such things, the names whereof are taken in such different senses as the name of Faith is in Scripture.

Now Faith, we all of us know, signifies Belief: and therein doth the nature of it lye. Him that we believe in is God: that which we believe is his Word. So then, Faith is a full belief or credence of the whole Word of God, and especially of the Gospel; a receiving it, and every part of it, in a way suitable to the

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the matter of it; agreeing to what-  
ever is therein affirmed, as being  
true; believing all the promises,  
that God will never fail on his part,  
unless we do on ours, setting our  
selves to fulfil all the commands, as  
believing all that is commanded to  
be our duty and of indispensable ne-  
cessity to salvation; being affected  
with an holy care and fear, upon  
consideration of all the threat-  
nings, as being perswaded God  
will be as good as his word, and  
punish all impenitent sinners. Faith,  
I say, is the hearty and sincere im-  
bracing and being perswaded of  
the whole word and these its parts  
and the being affected accordingly:  
and we must not single out the *pro-  
mises* and believe them alone, for  
all *commands* and *threats* are no less  
the word of God than are the pro-  
mises, and therefore must be as much  
believed, nor shall any one ever  
be justified who doth not thus be-  
lieve.

If it be asked, whether it be not  
*faith*



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*faith* in the *free promises* of the Gospel, or a trusting to God through Christ, that he will pardon my sin, which doth chiefly *justifie* me, I say, No: and that the embracing the doctrine of the Gospel, the receiving every command and threat so deeply into my heart, as that the belief of the one turns forthwith into obedience, and of the other into an holy fear, ( which are the other parts of faith ) cannot be conceived to be either in their own nature inferiour unto that trust, or less either valued or required by God, I do not say that God accepts of any of them, or all of them, for their worth: ( He accepts of them, and of the person, in whom they are purely through Christ; through his merits doth he impute this faith to such persons for righteousness, that is reckon and accept of this his cordial and impartial receiving his whole Gospel after this sort, as well as if he had performed perfect and un sinning obedience, as he was first:

first bound : ) but this I say ( and that upon the evidence already hinted ) that justification , or the pardoning of sin, is no more appropriated to that one act of faith, which we call trust, than to those other; and that I cannot ( if comparison in this case be made ) but account those other acts ( that impartial submitting and devoting the soul to obedience answerable to every command, that true resting in the fear of God ) as the more principal, worthy, and I am sure, less to be suspected acts of faith : At the least I cannot conceive, what we call a justifying faith to proceed any otherwise than as follows.

First, I do believe the promise of pardon of sin to be true, and God to be faithful , and that without all doubt God will not fail on his part, except I fail on mine. God will not fail to give the promised blessing, if I fail not to perform the condition, upon which he hath promised it.

Secondly, I therefore forthwith set my self about the condition, or duty.

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duty required, as I expect the blessing or promised mercy from God: I sorrow for my sins; I endeavour amendment of life; I cleave unto God with full purpose of impartial obedience.

Thirdly, having done so, I do not believe that all this is worth any thing in it self, but that it is through the meer grace of God in Christ Jesus, that I must be accepted, pardoned, and saved. Wherefore I trust to God according to his promise ( the condition of which I have endeavoured to fulfil ) that he will through Christ pardon all my sins, and reckon this my faith to me for righteousness. To trust for the pardoning of my sins upon any other terms is unbelief and presumption: for it is a believing God will pardon my sins upon other terms, than he hath said he would ever pardon sin, and that is a believing God will be false.

But now let the case be put, that some grievous sinner, much humbled

bled under the sence of his notorious wickedness, doth, as before-said, believe the promise to be true as it is, set himself about the fulfilling its condition (sorrowing repenting, &c.) believe all that he doth to be in its self worth nothing, but yet Christs merits to be of infinite worth, through which notwithstanding he dare not trust for the pardon of his sins, as remembring them to be so great, and doubting lest he hath not yet performed the condition, which the promise of the pardon of sin through Christs merits requires, and in this temper dies; Put, I say, this case, shall we think this man hath not a true and justifying faith? He hath surely; and it may be a truer faith, than hath many an one who hath yet more of the trust. But yet it is evident he hath not this trust: for he durst not, through sence of his own unworthiness animate himself thereto. Seeing therefore, that it is very possible a man may in such case be justified

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justified without that act of faith, I conclude that justification is not appropriate unto it, that is, that a trusting in God that he through Christ will pardon my sin, is not that act of faith which chiefly justifies me, and that they are very much mistaken, who take this (by it self) to be the true nature of justifying faith, that they believe God will pardon their sin for Christs sake. So then, I now see the course which I am to take, in my *humiliation*, to sue out the pardon of my sin: I am to *believe*, that God will not fail on his part, if I do not fail on mine: I am therefore to *repent* of my sins, as before I have been taught, and *persist in amendment of life*, all the while *trusting* in the grace of God through Christ, according to the promise of the Gospel, that I doing thus, my sins shall not be laid to my charge as being taken away by the cross of Christ, in whose merits I have, through this my faith and the mercy of God to me, a share.

SECT.

## S E C T. IX.

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*Of Prayer upon such Fasting-days.*

**T**Hat which will much heighten my affection in this my repentance, and further compleat all its parts yet remains, to wit prayer; which as it must on this occasion and day be more large and particular than ordinary, so I cannot now want matter for it, after such consideration of my condition, and of the way how I am to seek for pardon of sin as is supposed (if the former rules have been observed) to have foregone. Particularly, I am to frame my prayers, or at least to alter them, as neer as I can, to my condition.

1. Confessing my several sins, and that not without those aggravating circumstances, in which I formerly considered them.

2. Representing before God my sorrow, my resolution of heart against them.

3. Beg-

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3. Begging his grace, to assist me in the fulfilling my godly purposes and pardon for all my sins, whether known and confessed, or as yet unknown to me.

To these heads my Christian discretion may add more according to my particular condition. To wit if any judgment rest on me or mine, or is feared by reason of these my sins, I may implore deliverance from it: If any mercy is expected, or by me aimed at, which I fear my sins may most justly hinder or blast, I may importune God for the granting it; or otherwise apply my self as occasion serves.

Now as to the form or outward manner of my prayer; If I am able to pray otherwise, I shall not haply on these occasions see it always fit or convenient to use set or composed forms: for that there may be many particular affecting circumstances of my sins, which no form will express so plainly, as I have need to express them for the moving  
my

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my sorrow. If therefore I find my heart ready and so composed, that I dare venture upon what we call a *conceived* prayer, which being of mine own invention, by the assistance of the Spirit, may more perfectly suit with my condition in all, than one framed by another to my hand, having either noted in a paper before me the substance or matter of my *Confessions*, *Petitions*, and *Thanksgiving*, (which Paper for memories sake, I lay before me when I kneel down to prayer) or else so considered of, as that it will be ready, I may spend a few thoughts touching the particular expressions; by which I intend to represent this my mind to God. To this purpose these two practices may be helpful.

1. To read any part of the word of God, which (being I daily read some of it) I may know to be suitable to my present case. If I find mine heart hard, let me read some affecting



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ing working place. (Such I may be presumed to have noted as I have read in my course.) If I find it tender, let me read such place or places, as may nourish this tenderness, or raise me to an higher pitch of zeal and ardency in these duties which I perform to him. And in like manner, in other cases.

2. To recal and consider such fit expressions of the particular matters which I am to set forth before God, as I may be presumed to have observed and treasured up in my memory or Book, in my ordinary course of reading.

After such premeditation, with an holy fear, I am to endeavour to pour out my inward conceptions before God, as fitly and as fervently as I can. But I must not think that *fervency* lies in *loud speaking*, but in the inward affection of the soul: notwithstanding if my Closet be so situate, that I may judge I cannot be heard without, I may many times find, that it will conduce, if not to  
the

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the affecting me more, yet to the keeping my mind more close to my business, for me to speak in a voice exceeding a private whisper. Part. VI.  
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But let me be never so able a person, and my heart never so fixt, to use a form so far, as where occasion shall serve to leave it a while, (to wit where I would confess or ask more particularly) may keep my prayers from being loose, imperfect, broken and disorderly, and consequently make my devotions riper. Now such an one is this which follows.

**O** Thou Great, Holy, and Fearful God, unto whom all things are naked and open; and before whom, as being of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, nothing that is unrighteous shall stand. I even blush and dread to appear before thee: for in me there is nothing but iniquity that thou canst

Invocati.  
on.  
  
General  
Confessi-  
on of grie-  
vous guilt.

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canst behold. Iniquity indeed is too clean a word: I am nothing but filth. I have sinned against Heaven & before thee; and am so far unworthy of being called thy son, that I am not fit to be called thy servant: but deserve rather as a Rebel, as a faithless and treacherous wretch against thy Majesty, to be destroyed of the Destroyer, to have all thy wrath and plagues to meet in me, and to be made unto the world an example of thy severity and revenging justice, that by men might learn no more to presume and back slide.

Allegation  
of promi-  
ses, to af-  
fect or  
melt the  
heart  
more  
kindly.

But there is mercy with thee, O Lord, that thou mayst be feared and sought unto: Nor hast thou, as thou hast protested, any pleasure in the death of

sin.

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sinners; but art so desirous, that they might return and be healed, that thou hast not spared thy very only begotten Son, but hast given him to seek, and, by death it self, to save the lost sons of men; promising, that of all those, who through him come home unto thee, thou wilt by no means cast off any. I come, O Lord, at least I have here set my self in the way to come, and bewail my departures. And let not my Lord be angry, and I will confess.

Particular  
confession  
of habitu-  
al sins.

I have, O God, a most corrupt nature and heart, full of impurities and abominable things, as a Cage of unclean Birds. She was innocent in comparison of me, out of whom came but seven Devils: I may  
O most

Part. IV. most truly stile my self Le-

*Wheresoever in this  
prayer the mark † is  
found the Reader  
must not forget to  
consider particularly  
touching those ex-  
pressions whether  
they fit his condition*

gion: such swarms  
of lusts do possess  
me! The lusts of  
the flesh († Intem-  
perance, Idleness,  
Uncleanness) the  
lusts of the eyes  
(† Covetousness,

Envy) the Pride of life (†  
conceitedness of my self, Am-  
bition and proud Wrath) are  
things familiar to me, rooted  
and grounded in my heart:  
And that truly, Lord, not so  
much by nature, as by conti-  
nued custom and wicked pra-  
ctice. I have my self made my  
soul more depraved, than I ever  
received it from corrupt na-  
ture. That I am dull and  
heartless in the performance of  
all holy duties; that I am vigo-  
rous

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rous and active in the serving  
my lusts and pleasures, and the  
fulfilling the desires of my flesh  
and mind; that I am vain, heed-  
less, and commonly void of thy  
fear in all my ways, I owe very  
much unto my own vitious  
conversation; unto my giving  
my self up to walk in my own  
ways; unto my choosing vani-  
ty, and addicting my self there-  
to; unto my either total neg-  
lect or slighty discharge of thy  
worship. Impossible in a manner  
it is, that any one who lives as  
I have done, should have a bet-  
ter heart, than I have.

And at this rate, O Lord, Of Actual  
have I ever lived. My child- fin. In.  
hood, the innocent part of Child-  
my life, was a state of necessa- hood.  
ry ignorance of thee: yet even

O 2

herein

Part. IV.

Chap. 6.

Youth.

Ripe age.

herein how soon did the accursed fruits of inborn lusts begin to shew themselves! My youth, what was it, but a vain and brutish, a mad and sensual age! As to that small notice, which therein I had of thy will and nature, how little credit did I give unto it, and how ineffectual was it upon me, either to the quickening me to my duty, or restraining me from any wickedness! But as to my riper years, O Lord, I know not what to say: I should in truth sit down astonished before thee but that I want a due sence of my sinfulness. Mine iniquities are gone over my head: That they are greater than I can bear, is little; they are greater than I can comprehend or number. Nay if I should let pass my  
sins

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sins of ignorance, of infirmity, of heedlessness & inadvertency, (by which notwithstanding I seriously acknowledge my self, times without number, to have dishonoured and provoked thee: ) If I should insist only upon my knowing, presumptuous & wilful sins, even these, O Lord, it were impossible for me to reckon up. For besides that vast number of them, which I cannot call to mind (all which notwithstanding are upon record before thee ) what a black and tedious Catalogue of them have I here open ( or , which I can spread ) before thee ! How many wilful neglects, yea even contempts, of my duty ! How many resolute perpetrations of horrid crimes ; such which I

O 3

now



\* If need \* now am ashamed even to  
 require think of, yet did not then  
 now may blush to commit; sins, the  
 in this, and such other heinousness whereof being con-  
 such other places be sidered, If I could do no-  
 places be thing else but mourn over them  
 exchanged with of- all my days, though I should  
 ed with of- weep, as my Saviour sweat, in  
 ten or blood, under unknown anguish  
 sometimes, and agonies, I could not but  
 account my self impenitent.  
 Nay, had I only that one sin  
 of [ \* \* ] so often by me re-  
 peated to bewail, what sorrow

could suffice for its  
 due lamentation!

*Here are to be men-  
 tioned thy chiefest  
 and most frequent sin  
 or sins.*

But if I add here-  
 unto my [ \* \* ] my  
 [ \* \* ] &c. what rea-

son have I, were my fasts, con-  
 fessions, prayers and tears a  
 thousand fold to what they are  
 or can be, to sit down and la-  
 ment

ment my notorious impenitence!

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Chap. 6.

Actual sins  
aggravated.

And besides this weight of guilt, which the heinous nature of my sins themselves load me with, what a sad additional pressure do their dismal aggravations bring? What circumstance almost can there be that makes sin grievous which I may not find in most of mine? It is but an ordinary aggravation of my sins, that they have been committed against knowledge, that I have held thy truth in unrighteousness, and, being convinced of my duty, have both neglected it, and done contrary unto it:

† The very instant dictates of conscience, protesting against the sins which I have been about to commit; the smitings

Against  
Conscience.

Parr. IV.  
Chap. 6.

of mine own heart, not only after and before, but amidst the very commission of them, have not restrained my head-strong will.

Against  
the strivings of  
the Spirit.

† Nay O Lord, hath not the voice of thy Spirit joyned with the voice of my Conscience, and the united perswasions of both striven with me, but all in vain? † Have I not known that if I would resist, through thy grace I should overcome? And might I not through the same grace, have resisted if I would? † Have not I at the very same time thought of thy wrath and eternal flames belonging to those who do such things? and yet this in vain too.

Against  
Vows.

☛ And besides the vow of my Baptism, which I have owned and acknowledged my self to stand

stand bound by, Ah! Lord, have I not made many a particular vow against those very sins, which after, as a Dog to his vomit, I have returned to; And † those vows brought to thy Table, and sealed in the Blood of thy Son? ¶ Have not I tasted thy mercies encouraging mine obedience, and on the contrary, sometimes wrung out almost the dregs of thy wrath in punishment of my backslidings.

At the  
Lords  
Table.

Against  
mercies  
and Judg-  
ments.

Further, hast not thou many a time hindred me in my prosecution of these sins, and by some interposing providence, dulled the temptation, which I lay under towards them; † When yet I have proved so far a Devil to my self, as to retrieve the temptation, and o-

Against  
hindran-  
ces.

Part. IV.  
Chap. 6.

Continu-  
ance in sin

Openness  
of sin.

ver-bearing the voice of my conscience the resistance of thy Spirit, breaking through all engagements to obedience, which either thou or my self have laid upon me, yea, and the very hindrances and lets, which have been put in my way against those sins, I have returned to the attempts and practices of them! Ah Lord! What can such a sinner be fit for, but destruction? And yet after this sort, how long have I lived sinning! And how have I hardened my heart against all those means, which thou hast used for my betterment! Besides, How many of these my sins have been committed openly and in the sight of the Sun, to the dishonour of thee, and to the scandal of others, who

who beholding my practices, Part. IV.  
Chap. 6. have blasphemed, at least been provoked to blasphemy, and speak evil of Christianity!

All this, O Lord, is but my Confession of later sins. old wickedness: I have later

[and therefore if possible, some of them more grievous] sins to confess unto thee. It is but [such or such a time or day!

that I [\* \*] Ah

how can I lift up my Here mention later falls. face or look to-

wards thee my so oft offended God! Confession of my other mens sins. And yet, notwithstanding all this, I have not

yet done, O Lord. For besides these sins of mine own, what a multitude of the sins of other men do I stand accessory unto and guilty of! How many, for ought I know, have I undone by my example!

What

Part. IV.  
Chap. 6.

What a multitude is there, for whose profaneness and unbelief (being occasioned by the scandal against Religion, which my looseness hath possest them with) I am to answer for! † Some there are, whom I have more directly and neerly corrupted. And how many more may they have corrupted, who haply had not been in that case corrupt themselves, had not I propagated such sins to them! Ah! wretched man that I am, who have not been so far innocent as to be wicked alone, and destroy no more than my self.

Confessi-  
on of im-  
penitence.

And now, O Lord, after I have confessed thus much, notwithstanding all which I have confessed, & much more which I am not able to express, nor  
so

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Part. IV.  
Chap. 6.

so much as my self to know, what an hard, unbroken and stupid heart have I! The truth is the multitude and grievousness of my sins is such, as is enough to make me impenitent and desperate upon the meer sight of them. † I may well doubt whether it be possible, that such a backsliding wretch as my self should never be renewed again unto repentance, or thereby restored. ¶ But forasmuch as I understand, that to turn thus desperate, and to neglect repentance and amendment of life, would be worse than all the wickedness, which I have hitherto wrought, I am here prostrate before thee to bewail my self, and with sorrow and grief of heart for my former ways do I here cast my self upon

Address  
of affi-  
ance, or  
casting  
the soul  
on God  
for mer-  
cy.



Part. IV.  
Chap. 6.

Resolution  
against sin  
represented  
to God:

upon thee. If thou wilt have mercy, thou canst still save me: If thou wilt not, Lord, I perish. But dost thou use to suffer those to perish, who thus with such repentance as they can, submit and humble themselves at thy footstool, crying unto thee for help? Far be it from thee, thou Father of Mercies! Notwithstanding, in as much as I, being much worse than ordinary sinners, do more justly deserve to find no place for repentance, and have therefore more reason to fear how thou mayst deal with me, deal with me as thou wilt, † through thy grace I will sin no more; no more knowingly and presumptuously as I have done. And to that end I have here in thy presence this day considered my ways:

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Chap. 6.

ways: † I have endeavoured to find out those wiles and methods, by which the Devil and mine own lusts have ensnared me in such grievous sins. † I have resolved upon impartial diligence as well in my endeavours against these particular evils as against all other, and in performing unto thee hearty and intire obedience. These Resolutions I here humbly present before thee, sacredly engaging my self to do my utmost to keep them, and beseeching thee by thy grace to engage my heart more firmly to them. And, Lord, let not any dulness or want of that affection, with which I ought to have confessed my sins, to have bewailed my guilt, and to have passed these resolutions

Petition.

For acceptance of penitence:

Part. IV.  
Chap. 6.

For more  
broken-  
ness of  
heart.

For tho-  
rough  
and par-  
ticular  
converfi-  
on.

ons, hinder, that this my seri-  
ous humiliation of my self  
should not be accepted before  
thee. Such contrition, as thou  
hast enabled me to, I have  
endeavoured, sorrowing that I  
am not more deeply humbled,  
Such, which is wanting, do  
thou bestow; For it is no less  
thy property to bestow than  
accept the contrite heart: The  
broken spirit is, O Lord, from  
thee. When thou of old com-  
mandedst water out of the flin-  
ty Rock, it forthwith yielded  
obedient streams: nor can my  
heart (dry and hard as it is)  
but dissolve into holy tears, if  
thou wilt bid it melt: Give  
forth then the word, O God;  
Speak, thy servant is here rea-  
dy to hear. Turn thou me  
and I shall be turned. Send out  
thy

thy good Spirit: let it enlighten the eyes of my mind, in the knowledge both of my self and thee: let it savingly perswade me of the truth of all that thou hast spoken, and especially, of the defiling, cursed, and damning nature of sin, of the sufficiency and efficacy of the merits of Christ Jesus unto all those, who by a right faith apply themselves to thee through him. (I do, O Lord, believe, help my unbelief.) And grant that this sight and perswasion both of my sin and Saviour may affect mine heart, so that I may sorrow after a godly sort: and that sorrow may bring forth in me those wholesom fruits (which after all my endeavours of repentance I cannot but lament to be

Part. IV.  
Chap. 6.

For Per-  
severance.

For Justi-  
fication.

be much wanting in me, to wit) *carefulness against sin, vehement desire and zeal of holiness, indignation and an holy revenge against my self*; by all which I may for the future *clear* my self, and ever approve mine heart honest, upright and sincere before thee. ☛ Suffer not this my righteousness to be only, as a morning cloud or early dew, soon passing away, but let thy grace always dwelling in me keep open in my soul an ever-flowing Fountain of such penitence, that I may go on thus mourning to mourn over my sins, and perfecting holiness in thy fear; accounting all little enough, if so be I may but in the end obtain mercy. And this my penitent return (at least hearty endeavour of such return)

turn) accompanied with perfecting study of impartial obedience to thee; do thou, however most unworthy in it self through the perfect merits of thy Son, accept, washing away all my sins (both the iniquities of my youth and transgressions of my riper years, as well known as unknown) especially my (\*\*) in his blood; and reckoning, according to thy gracious Covenant, this my faith (which by such works as these shall discover it self to be alive and true) unto me for righteousness. And, if thy infinite Wisdom shall see it to be good for me; do thou grant me this further happiness, that I thus living in thy fear, may be ever filled

*Here mention  
thy chiefest sin  
or sins.*

*For assurance.*

Part. IV.  
Chap. 6.

filled with peace and joy, through a comfortable assurance of thy favour, and hopes of eternal glory.

For outward  
comforts.

As to all my outward affairs, by thy good providence be thou pleased so to overrule all events, that whatsoever befalls me may work together to me for good. My sins indeed, O Lord, deserve quite contrary; even the severest afflictions of thy wrath and fiery displeasure. And I do most seriously acknowledg that in all the judgments, which thou hast at any time laid upon me, thou hast used much mercy. All the pains, which my body hath felt: all the losses, which have impaired my estate; all the slanders, which have blasted my name

Confession  
on as to  
judgments.

# Private Devotion.

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oy, name (particularly \*\*) I em- Part. IV.  
flu- brace as infinitely less than my Chap. 6.

opes deserts. That † I am

af- in any straits [ \*\* ]

nce that I suffer otherwise

rule (in my body, relati-

be- ons, &c. \*\*) were all a thou-

r to sand fold to what it is, I should

ed, confess it to be most just. Were

ra- I to enjoy no more good than

ons I do deserve, I should have

ea- just nothing. Righteous there-

ly fore art thou, O Lord when I

dg- plead with thee. Yet if thou

oy wilt be intreated by thy re-

ast- penting servant, to † with-

he draw (\* or withhold)

ath thy hand, to remove

ve the punishment I feel

an- (or not to inflict the pu-

ny- nishments which I fear )

me but through the blood

of Christ to deliver me

*Here mention a-  
ny particular af-  
flictions.*

Depre-  
cation of  
them.

*\* These and such  
like expressions  
are to be used ac-  
cording to persons  
particular condi-  
tions.*

from



Part. IV.

Chap. 6.

from thy present wrath, as well as from the wrath to come, thy servant shall ever bless and praise thee, and be able to serve thee with more chearful diligence. However, Lord, thy Will be done, bring me surely to thy self, let it be by what means thou wilt: Please thy self, thy servant will endeavour to be content: Deny me what things thou wilt, only deny me not *Grace, Pardon, and thy Self.*

Interces-  
sion.

And not only upon me, O Lord, but upon all men do thou have mercy, according to the gracious pleasure of thine own most holy Will, Especially upon the universal Church Enlarge thou its bounds; provide for its safety and purity, delivering any part of it, which  
is

## Private Devotion. 311

Part. IV.  
Chap. 6.

well is in danger, and reforming  
me, whatsoever of it is corrup-  
and ted. Do thou with all fuita-  
erve ble mecies bless this particu-  
dili- lar Church: Forgive the  
thy publick sinnes (\*\*) )  
arely Heal the publick Ca- *Here mention*  
what lamities (\*\*.) Preserve *such sins or ca-*  
thy and every way be gra- *lamities.*  
your cious unto the Kings Maje-  
what sty, his Queen, and all the  
deny Royal Family. Let all thy  
d thy Priests be cloathed with  
Righteousness, and let thy  
, O work prosper in their hands:  
do and especially within this Pa-  
ding rish, of which I am a part,  
nine let the knowledge and fear  
cial- of thee increase. Visit all  
arch my Kindred, Relations, and  
pro- Acquaintances (\*\*) ) with  
ty, such blessings as they need.  
ich  
is

Reward

Part. IV. Reward a thousand fold all  
 Chap. 6. who have shewn any kindness

*In all these vacancies thus marked (\*\*) make such particular mention as thy condition shall require, or prudence suggest.*

to thy servant; especially (\*\*) Forgive and have mercy upon all mine enemies, and let not one of them ever fare the worse for any wrong done to me. Deliver in thine own good

time thy righteous ones out of all their afflictions, and in the mean time support them, sanctifying all unto them. (\*\*) Shew thy self every way allsufficient unto all thine.

Thanksgiving.

Finally, O Lord, I bless and praise thy glorious grace, for all those blessings which I enjoy, and those particular deliverances, whether ancient or later

## Private Devotion.

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Part. IV.

Chap. 6.

latter, which thou hast vouchsafed me. (\*\*) Above all, for thy redeeming, not only me but the whole humane nature, by the precious blood of thy well-beloved Son; for that knowledge which I have of thee in him my Saviour Christ Jesus; for any sight and sense of my sin, which through thy grace I have; for any hopes of finding mercy in that great day.

(\*\*) I, O Lord, am far less than the least of these mercies. It is thy goodness, thy goodness alone, which is the fountain whence they came: and mayst thou from me, and from Heaven and Earth, ever receive the glory of that thy goodness.

*Here bleſs God  
for any inward  
joy, enlargments,  
&c.*

P

May

**Parr. IV.** May I ever serve thee in new-  
**Chap. 6.** ness of life and answerable  
 walking.

**Conclufo-  
 ry Petiti-  
 ons.**

And do thou forgive not  
 only my former ingratitude,  
 but my present want of thank-  
 fulness, together with all the  
 sins of these my holy things,  
 washing me, and my very  
 tears, prayers, and penitence  
 in the blood of my Saviour  
 Christ Jesus, in whose words  
 thy servant will speak yet once  
 more,

*Our Father, &c.*

It is not to be supposed that this  
 Prayer without any alteration will  
 suit with the condition of every  
 Reader: God forbid all should  
 have sinned at that rate, to come  
 up to which this Prayer was fra-  
 med. The prudent Christian  
 therefore

therefore is to add, leave out, alter, what he sees good ; or, if able himself to do better, to lay aside all. Nothing is here obtruded on any, only directions and help intended to some who need them.

Part. IV.  
Chap. 6.

## SECT. X.

*Of offerings to God for the use of the poor ; departure out of the Closet, and behaviour afterwards.*

**M**Y Prayers being thus finished, I should not hastily run out, but pause a while, and remember, that there is one work remaining, which is not to be neglected, if I have wherewithal to do it, being it is required by God in an acceptable Fast : and that is to add something every fast, though it be the less to what I have formerly laid aside for the poor ; or if there be no such stock already made by me, much more then to design and de-

Part. IV.  
Chap. 6.

vote somewhat to that purpose. *This is the fast I have chosen, to deal thy bread unto the hungry, &c.* It being thus given, I may deal it when I shall see occasion. Now as to the particular manner of this practice, directions have been above given, which especially upon these days it will be expedient to observe.

And this being done, let me with chearfulness depart my Closet; let not my behaviour be without innocent alacrity: and let it be my special care so to order all my carriage on these my fasts, that they may not, if possible, be taken notice of by any but my self and God; as being mindful of that command of my Saviours, *Anoint thine head, and wash thy face, that thou appear not unto men to fast* that is, behave thy self with such outward chearfulness (of which anointing the head and wathing the face are Arguments) that no man ordinarily beholding thee, would take the day he sees thee so, to be

be one of thy fast or mourning days.

Part. IV.  
Chap. 7.

## CHAP. VII.

*Of great and more extraordinary Fasts, and the work of them.*

BESIDES these my Fasts which come in course, at least once a week, several occasions may befall me, which may require an extraordinary fast. Such is any great evil hanging over mine head, or my friends, or the Nations, any considerable change of my way of living, or the like: but especially, when I am to receive the Holy Communion.

My work upon such occasions will be the same as is formerly directed to: only my Christian discre-



tion will order it with a particular respect to that my great occasion which calls me to fast : which occasion I am especially to meditate upon ( and that not without a regard had to my sins : if there be any evil which I deprecate, to consider how my sins have been the causes of it ; if any good which I beseech for, how again my sins may blast that ) and accordingly to commend it to God in my prayers : in which case also the form of prayer delivered in the foregoing Chapter will not be useless.

Particularly, as to that which will most frequently come in practice my humiliations preparatory for the Lords Supper. In these, besides that examination of my self, which in ordinary course I make, I am to look over mine *Accomptal*, to see every week since my last communicating, what my carriage hath been, how I have amended, especially in those particulars, in which I had formerly taken notice of my miscar-

miscarriages, and vowed reformation. All my revolts and backslidings are to be attentively viewed in themselves and in their aggravations, and repentance as before taught, to be with all diligence and fervour, that I can, exercised. But in case I am a new communicant, and now making my first addresses unto the Lords table, or in case I have formerly been there, but not with so due preparation as I now would make, although the former rules of the practice of humiliation and repentance contain the chief part of my duty, yet directions more particular will be presently subjoyned.

Yea, and besides these times of special exigence, ought I to be often surveying and looking over mine Accomptal. In mine ordinary daily devotions, or in my devotions upon my fast-days I shall find both need and opportunity for it. And if Scholars find it necessary to peruse their own Collections or Common-place books, if Shopkeepers review often

Part. IV.  
Chap. 8.

their books, to the end they may, by seeing what they have formerly done, know how to order their future proceedings in their business, so as not to go backward, or be diligent to no purpose, how much more care ought I to take in the concerns of my soul, and for that Jewel which if I loose, although I should gain the whole world, I am irreparably undone.

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## CHAP. VIII.

### *The Conclusion.*

**T**HE Author of this small piece, Christian Reader, is very sure, that be thou who thou wilt, thou canst not but approve for the main that practice, which is here commanded to thee: although there should be some particulars (as to

## Private Devotion.

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Part. IV.  
Chap. 8.

to the observation of Holy days  
or the like ) which may not  
suit with the humour of every  
mans devotion. Confident he  
is, he saith, that the daily  
practice of *Reading, Meditation,*  
*Self examination, Prayer,* the  
orderly and due practice of *Hu-*  
*miliation, Mortification,* and the  
rest of those Substantials,  
which are here directed to,  
cannot be gainsaid. It might  
have been better taught, but  
he hath done it as well and as  
plainly as he could. Being  
therefore that thou canst not  
but say, he is a good man who  
thus lives, and wish that thou  
ever hadst lived so, he chargeth  
it again upon thy conscience  
thus to live: else art thou self-  
condemned, and guilty of  
known negligence and omis-

P 5

sion.

sion. Thou doest not endeavour what notwithstanding thy conscience cannot but approve. He is confident further that if thou didst but feel that peace, quiet, joy and happiness, which such practice leaves behind it, if thou hast any sence what it is to have a clear Conscience, and therefore free and chearful access to God, and an humble fearfulness of the face of men, which without some such practice as this thou canst never have, thou needst no other argument to quicken thee to this practice. Find a greater happiness on earth, than for a man to be at peace with and like himself, and get that peace by any other course, than such exercise of godliness, such circumspection over all

all thy ways, as hath been here taught, and thou shalt have leave to neglect all: but if thou canst not, then think thy self bound to these practices. For directions in the making use of the Book thou hast them in the *Admonition to the Reader*, in the beginning of the Book, whither return and read the whole over again: It will be no whit worse the second time read: And so God bless it and thee.

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**FINIS.**

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PERSWASIVES  
WITH  
DIRECTIONS  
To the frequent and Holy use  
OF THE  
LORDS SUPPER.

By way of Appendix to the  
*Method of Private Devotion.*

---

2 Cor. 3. 4.

*Having renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, we walk not in craftiness, nor handle the Word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commend our selves to every mans Conscience in the sight of God.*

---

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Church-yard. MDC LXXII.





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PERSWASIVES  
WITH  
DIRECTIONS  
To the frequent and Holy use  
OF THE  
Lords Supper.

*By way of an Appendix to  
the Method of Private  
Devotion.*

---

CHAP. I.

*A proposition of the particular  
matters to be treated of in this  
Appendix.*

Private devotion was never designed to take us off from, but prepare us for the publick worship  
of

Chap. I.

of God. Wherefore, as consideration hath been above had, and accompt endeavoured, touching those secret duties in the Closet, which publick prayer, hearing the Word, and sanctifying the Lords day require of me in order to their due performance, so is it but justice now that I consider what particular work in my Closet the worthy receiving of the Lords supper will find my devotion. And forasmuch, as upon the very first thoughts of this most Divine and Heavenly Ordinance, if reflecting withal on common practice, I cannot but observe a double fault very rife in this our *Israel*, *Neglect* on the one side, some coming not at all or very seldom, and of *Temerity* on the other, in them who come to it (and perhaps often) but consider not much either how or why they come, it ought to be my care to avoid both these rocks, and as commanded both to *do it often*, and with due remembrance of him whose death

# the Lords Supper.

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death I shew forth till he come. Chap. 2.

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## CHAP. II.

*Considerations to move to frequenting the Lords Supper.*

**T**O move me to be a frequent guest at the Lords Table; let me duly consider the obligations which lye upon me thereunto: some my Saviour, some the Church, some my very own condition and wants lay upon me.

## SECT. I.

*Obligations from Christ.*

**F**irst, my Saviours very instituting a means by which I might be so intimately united, and as it were mixt with him, obliges me not only in point of *Ingenuity* but *Gratitude*. For, let me lay it to heart. May this earthen body of mine, polluted as it is with a world  
of

of sins, be yet made the temple and receptacle of the glorious body of my Lord, nay, in a sort have that body incorporated with it, and is it possible I can be so dull as not to move with all might and haste to the means of such advancement? such dulness and baseness of spirit is not surely incident into a reasonable creature, if duly considerative. But then let me remember, This body was pierc'd, and torn, and given to death for me; this blood spilt for the remission of my sins, and will not this endear it to me? Have I means appointed by my very crucified Saviour himself, by which I may come and take my share of that very body which hung on the Cross for me, of that blood, by which I believe and hope for the remission of my sins; and can I be so irreligiously ungrateful as not to come at it? Are neglects the only fit retribution to repay unto my crucified and bleeding Lord, bleeding for me too, offering me still his blood

## the Lords Supper.

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blood? I cannot sure turn my back. Chap. 2.

¶ Further, a second obligation my Saviour laid upon me, by that strange zeal of love towards me and the humane nature, with which he came to the institution of this Sacrament. When he speaks of his own passion, before he entred upon it, *I have a Baptism, saith he, to be baptized with, and how am I straitned till it be accomplished?* He seems even to have longed to suffer for us, to have thought the time tedious till he had been betray'd, and scott, and scourged, and tortured, and had bled for us (for a mixture of *love* and *desire* of accomplishing his work, conflicting with natural dread of the foreseen cup, must that his being *straitned* speak) and at the beginning of that supper after which he instituted this Sacrament. *With desire* (the word is used for Lust) have I desired *to eat this Passeover with you before I suffer.* Luke 22. 15. As if he had said, within these few hours I shall be lead away to suffer for you, which

which (such is my love to you) I long to do. But before that, I have another no less passionate an appetite to satisfy, and that is of instituting that Sacrament by which you, and all that shall believe in my name to the end of the world, may be made partakers of that body and Blood, which I am about to give for them. Let me lay then this to heart: can I now add *unnaturalness* to my *disingenuity* and *ungratitude*, and turn my back on my dying Saviour, when he is now greedy and most passionately desirous, I might take my part of that body and blood which was given for my redemption.

If desires move not, yet surely *commands* may, for these are most directly obligatory,

Thirdly then, If my dying Saviour did not *command* me this, and command it too in *remembrance* of his death and passion, and to *shew forth his death* till he come, the neglect might possibly seem  
more

## the Lords Supper.

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Chap. 2.

more tolerable. But now to the opportunity of the Sacraments own nature and our Lords most passionate desires to have it instituted, he hath added his commands also, three times recorded by the Evangelists, and once by *St. Paul*, that it might not be deemed an unnecessary matter, which could be spared, shall I to my disingenuous and unnatural ingratitude, add direct disobedience and rebellion? Shall I stand out against all those obligations which heaven can lay upon me? Will I neither be won by such institutions, which even ingenuity and natural ambition would prompt me to embrace, nor yet by peremptory commands to tast and take what is so provided? What can I, in case I still stand out, think of my self: What can I say in mine own excuse? Or what can I look for, but to be denied my portion in that blood, the participation of which, against such obligations from my Saviour I have thus neglected?

SECT. 2.



## SECT. II.

*Obligations from the Church.*

**B**ESIDES this, the Church hath laid obligations upon me hereto both by its *Practice, Command and Discipline.*

As to the *Practice* of the Church, it will not be easie to pitch upon any publick degeneracy in the present Church, which the practice of the Primitive Church doth more upbraid us of, than infrequent and seldom communicating. In all likelihood immediately after our Lords Ascension, and the Descension of the Holy Ghost, the Apostles, and those early Profelytes of Christianity daily received the Lords Supper: which though a most learned person, who more than once affirmed it most probable, ( from *Acts 2.* ) afterwards seems to doubt, yet I doubt less of, forasmuch as St. *Austin* acquaints us it was usual even in his days. How-

Epist. 118  
ad Januar.

ever

## the Lords Supper. 335

ever that none of their solemn Assemblies in the antient Church were without a Communion is most certain from all antiquity: and the Scripture it self testifies exprelly as to *Acts 20.7.*

the Lords day: The restauration of which pious course, that our Church at the Reformation designed, is from hence most evident, that there is no Lords day nor Festival throughout the year, which hath not a peculiar Communion Service appointed for it.

¶ If the practice of the Primitive and purer Church move us not, I confess there is reason to fear the *injunctions* of our particular Church will but little avail. However, he who bid us account that brother as *Matth 18.* *an Heathen and Publican* who refused to hear the Church, thought sure that her commands had no small obligation on her children. And the Apostle that commanded *us to obey those that rule over us, Heb. 13.* *and submit our selves to them in as* *17.* *much as they watch for our souls;* and

Chap. 2.

and w<sup>th</sup>al added, that it is *unprofitable for us*, that by reason of our untractableness they should be able only with grief to give account to heaven of us, conceived it fit we should be obedient to such wholesome Laws, as those our Rulers should give unto us.

Now the substance of the Commands of our Church in this case we find in the Rubrick at the end of the Communion, that in all Parishes every Parishioner communicate, *at least thrice a year*. This is the least our Church will tolerate, not but that it is evident she should have her Children more frequently to communicate, as appears from that expression *at the least thrice*; but considering the common backwardness of people, she commanded what she might have hopes to obtain, the *least* which possibly (the generality of mens occasions being all considered) she could judge in any sort tolerable, and that was *thrice a year*. Wherefore in Cathedral and Collegiat

# the Lords Supper.

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Chap. 3.

legiate Churches, it is enjoyned (as in the precedent part of the same Rubrick) that all the Ministers thereof communicate (except in case of reasonable impediments, of which negligence undoubtedly is none) every Lords day at least; that expression intimating (as well as an other [*viz. on Holidays if there be no Communion*] a little before) that it was fit and requisite that commonly on days of Solemn Assemblies, as are Lords days and Holidays, there should be a Communion. ¶ Of this requiring of her Ministers (where in convenient number to make up a Communion) that they should thus often communicate, whereas the people seem left at greater liberty, I suppose the reason is, because she presumes and requires them to be of stricter lives and sanctity than the common sort, So that it will from hence follow that our Church judgeth it requisite to all persons, who would live strictly and more devote to God,

Q

than

than the common sort who too much incumber themselves in the world, frequently if not weekly, to communicate.

As to *Discipline*, it hath been most reasonable adjudged, that the severe sentence of *excommunication* is most justly due to such who neglect the participation of the Lords Supper. The Canon enjoyneth the Minister and Church-warden to signifie such: The Church-warden is bound upon his oath, as the Minister by the fidelity he owes to the Church, to make presentment of such. And amongst those particular cases for which by statute, the Writ to take the *Excommunicate person* lies, not receiving the Communion is one expressly. Which severe Discipline none can justly blame, who considers, that such persons do in a mannner Excommunicate themselves, or will grant, that the Church and the Magistrate are bound not to see the Commands of Christ, and Ordinances of the Gospel

# the Lords Supper.

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Chap. 2.

spel neglected, but to constrain such, who have subjected themselves to the Gospel, to obedience to it, where they will not voluntarily perform it. And it seems reasonably demandable, why a man should be punished for *swearing*, for *prophaneing the Lords day*, or the like crimes (as those who blame the severity of this Law judge fit) if he may not be punished for *gross neglect* of the Lords Supper; seeing both equally offend against Divine commands I cannot then but in reason think my self bound frequently to communicate by the obligations which the primitive and present Church lay upon me.

## SECT. III.

*Of obligations from within.*

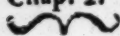
**L**Astly, doth not my own condition and wants strongly importune and oblige me to it?

1. Have I so faithfully kept the covenant of my Baptisme

Q<sup>2</sup>

and

Chap. 2.



and those latter vows and engagements which I have made to God that I do not need to renew them? Alas! have I been faithful to any one of them? Now what so proper or firm renovation of them as by this second Sacrament. If I have broken my covenant, I have certainly forfeited the benefits I covenanted for, pardon of my sins, and life eternal. And how can I expect these if when God daily offers to receive me again into covenant (as he doth by this Sacrament) I neglect to come in, and enter covenant. But possibly that I think I can do, by setting down private resolutions in my Closet, without coming in publick to the Lords Table: Let me enquire then further:

2. Are all my corruptions so mortified, and graces so strong that single vows will hold me? Do not I daily find a double, yea treble and manifold cord (all the methods which I can invent or use to confirm my resolutions) to be little enough

## the Lords Supper.

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enough, and ( God knows ) many times too little ? And must I not confess this Sacrament instituted by Christ as the primary and most Sovereign means of strengthening me ? Nay ; do not I find in my own experience , possibly , that of all the vows that ever I made in my life, I have been most cautious of those which I sealed in the blood of my Saviour ? Though possibly ( wretch that I am ! ) have broken some of them yet I broke them most difficultly. With what conscience then, can I absent my self from, and neglect this Sacrament ? Am I affraid of making my vows too strong ? But possibly, I am jealous of my self, that I shall break even these vows thus renewed , and thus sealed, and therefore fear by new communicating I shall only aggravate my succeeding falls. Let me consider this case :

Is my guilt like to be any whit the less, because I do not strive against sin as much as I may, and use

Q<sub>3</sub>

against



Chap. 2.

against it to all means I have? As in my present state, I despond in a manner of my own standing: of these two it is more likely, I shall be able to overcome when I struggle to the last effort, and leave no means unattempted, by which I may strengthen my self and get above mine enemies. Certainly if I endeavour my utmost against known and deliberate sins, God will not charge every slip or surprisal as a cancelling of this my renewed Covenant. But possibly I distrust my self and fear I shall not do all I can, to stand: In this case to come to a short issue, either I do resolve for happiness or not: If I resolve not for happiness indeed, 'tis no matter whether I communicate or no; I am a person desperate; who have given up my self to Sin and Hell. If I do resolve for happiness, it is certain I must resolve to exert my utmost might against every sin, and especially against such to which I am most subject. And if I have so resolved

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solved, but distrust my own constancy to such passed resolves, I shall be willing and desirous to use all means to enforce, ensure and ( if it were possible ) constrain my self to constancy ; and God hath not appointed, nor can I find out a more Sovereign means than this of the Lords Supper. I am therefore in conscience, as I tender my own Salvation, to frequent it, and in case I should yet fall again, to sorrow more deeply for such supposed future falls than ever, to resolve and endeavour new amendment ( as before considered in the Practice of Repentance ) to weigh with my self what a sad condition they are in, who have the abused blood of Christ to witness against them, from which estate there is no way in the world to rescue me; but resuming, with new vigor, my former good resolutions, and fresh addresses unto that blood for pardon and strength : thus am I to persist in that daily practice of repentance, and mortification, and use

Q 4

*Priv.  
Devot.  
Part. 4.  
Chap. 6.  
Sect. 4, 5.*

use of all means, especially this of this strengthening Sacrament, as often as I have opportunity; to the end I may rescue my self out of this snare of the Devil. So that in fine, if this by me case I see my self inexcusably necessary to my own ruine, if I neglect this recovering Sacrament.

¶ Besides these, I have great reason to fear there are other wants in my soul, which oblige me to frequent communicating. I enquire therefore further.

3. Do I use to keep all my accounts so even with God, and my heart in such a gracious frame, that I have not much need of that Ordinance, which shall bring me to such righting my accounts ( I mean to the strict examination of my self, touching new sins, reforming for the future, and sueing out the pardon of what is past ) and to a more tender and heavenly temper of mind? Alas, is not there many a sin which I fall into in my days, which

which passeth me unrepented ! And Chap. 2.  
as to all my private Fasting and Humiliations of my self, have I not need of some efficacions means, to make me more strict and careful, to deliver me from my usual slightness and perfunctory performance of such duties ? Again, Doth not many a day pass me, in which I have great reason to complain of the want of a due sence of God, and my own duty on my heart ? Do not I put up many a dull, and heedless and hard-hearted prayer ? and must I not confess, that, as it is very sinful and dangerous thus to live, with particular sins unrepnted of ( or only carefly considered ) and with an heart very much void of an heedful fear, or eyeing of God, so that the Lords Supper is a very proper and effectual remedy to both these so dangerous and intolerable evils ? Can I then impute either to frailty of my nature, and to common indispositions incident from worldly business ; if in the

**Chap. 2.** mean time I am conscious to my self of my neglect of that Divine Ordinance, which would rescue me from both. I see then, that that happy condition, into which preparation for this Sacrament would set me ( of having matters streighter in a good measure between Heaven and my soul, by reason whereof I were fit for any thing, even death it self ) and that blessed frame of spirit, into which both preparation and the frequent participation of the Ordinance it self would bring me, render the neglect most inexcusable. Again,

4. Do I walk so innocently, and with such exactness observe the rules of Charity, as that I have no need of that holy Seal of Christian Communion, which I dare not come unto, till I have reconciled my heart to every man living, and to my power made satisfaction for every wrong I have done, and put an end to all unchristian contentions and animosities between me  
and

## the Lords Supper.

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and others? Certainly my life is not so purely inoffensive, but I wrong many, if not by deed yet by words, or at least by uncharitable surmises and censures of them, and possibly too by secret ill will and grudge. And are these things either unnecessary to be rooted out; or am I so ready and diligent in the doing of it, and in further reconciling my self, and satisfying my offended Brother, that for this purpose I have no need of this Sacrament which shall enforce me after a sort there-to?

5. Is my Christian faith and hope so strong, my comforts and holy joys so firm and advanced, that I find not this Seal of my union with my Saviour and pardon of all my sins most necessary? Should a dangerous disease befall me, or my life otherwise be hazarded, have I a confidence of my future happiness strong enough to bear me up above the terrors of death, and to supply with courage to endure what ever danger

**Chap. 2.** danger I may be brought into, even death it self, rather than seek an escape by any unworthy means? Rather, were I now to die, would I not miserably tremble, and doubt of my future estate? Were I stript of all earthly comforts, should I not be miserably dissatisfied, and unable to quiet my self and meekly endure the Cross with due *respect unto the recompence of reward*, which I have not possibly such a well-grounded hope ( much less such a certainty, perswasion and assurance ) of, as it concerns me to provide, for the arming my self against all trials. And let me lay this to heart duly: If I come to be perplext with fears and doubts upon my death-bed, want courage, or behave my self basely in suffering, shall I not then too late a thousand times blame and bitterly cry out of my neglect of this sacred Ordinance? shall I not say all I could have done had been little enough to support my spirit, and be ready to sinck that I have been so regardless?

Last-

Lastly : But suppose I have been so happy a man as to have behaved my self so Christianly in all these particulars, as that my conscience accuseth me not of any fault or defect ( which I shall scarce find ) either as to unfaithfulness in holiness, or neglectiveness of my great accounts unmeet frame of spirit, uncharitableness, weakness of faith and hope, yet I shall have need of this Sacrament to keep me in this so blessed a condition. Certainly I have not, nor can have any assurance of my perseverance, ( which the word of God will warrant or not call wild and presumptuous ) without my use of those means, which the Gospel ordained, as well for the continuance, as advance of me in grace.

SECT.



## S E C T. IV.

*The sum of all urged against the ordinary excuses.*

**T**O sum up all then. Is the Lords Supper so great a priviledge, yea even advancement to my nature? Was my Lord so passionately desirous to have it instituted? Did he now dying strictly charge me to eat thereof in *remembrance* of him? Doth the Church by her practice, command, and discipline enjoin and even enforce me to it; and is the thing it self so exceeding needful and beneficial to me, being a renovation of my Covenant with God, a confirmation of my vows, and a strengthening me against all sins; yea further, a means to place me in the full favour of God, and bring me to a most heavenly temper of mind, to renew, maintain and augment my charity, my faith, hope, and Christian comfort, and a

pre-

## the Lords Supper.

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Chap. 2.

preservative of me all my days ; and can I absent my self from it at any time ; when I have occasion of receiving ? Or if I once, or seldom absent my self from it, yet can I possibly live in the neglect of it ? It is certain if I do, nothing of *reason*, *Christianity*, nor *sense of my own interest* can move me. Suppose Christ himself should speak from heaven ( and so he doth by his word and Ministry ) suppose when I turn my back upon that prepared table, he should call to me from above. You ! *I dyed for you, I commanded you when dying in remembrance* of that my death, to eat of this bread, and drink of this cup, the benefit thereof is greater than you conceive ; I have here commissioned my servants to give it you ; here it stands prepared for you ; my *Church commands, invites*, doth all possibly to bring you to it ; can you turn your back upon this body, this blood of mine ? Is it nothing to you, that it was given for you ? nothing that  
it.

Chap. 2.

it is now offered to be given to you? Do you expect pardon, and grace, and life everlasting by it, and can you neglect it? What answer could I make? Can I think in my conscience I should not be ashamed of making this? Lord, the Church professeth she thinks to receive it; kneeling is a reverence befitting so sacred matter: I think that reverence to be too much, (though there be neither express Scripture, nor evident reason for such my thoughts.) And, because I may not be so irreverent as I think fit, I will not come. In short: All objections I can make of things of this nature are either pure cavils or matters very uncertain and disputable. The thing urged is a certain and undoubted duty: Now, am I just to my reason, or at all truly conscientious, if for *matters dubious*, (which (if the Church know more than I, as in good manners I am bound to think) are safe) I neglect so *undoubted, weighty and beneficial a duty*?

It

## the Lords Supper.

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¶ It can be no excuse to me, that Chap. 3.  
I come not because I am not prepared, since to be unprepared is my sin :  
and to say I wanted time to prepare  
my self, is as much as to say, I am  
not at leasure to be a Christian. I  
cannot therefore but see my self in  
conscience bound frequently to com-  
municate, and it is fit I consult how  
frequently.

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### CHAP. III.

*How often a Christian ought to  
partake of the Lords Supper,  
and at what age to begin.*

NOW because nothing can be  
done often, which doth not  
once begin to be done, therefore  
this Question *how often* ought I to  
resort unto the Lords Table, in-  
cludes this, ( which it is meet be first  
answered ) *How soon* shall I come  
hither, or at *what age* ?

To

## Directions touching

To this the Orders of our Church seem to answer, at *Sixteen* years of age. But then, that passage is to be interpreted by others, which require that all persons now growing adult, be *confirmed* before their admission to the Lords Supper. So that the true answer to this Question depends upon the right understanding of *Confirmation*, of which briefly.

It is agreed by all sober men (though possibly otherwise of different persuasions) that there should be some solemn transition from our Infant-Membership to our adult, that is, from our being Christian Children, and as it were under age, to our being reckoned riper, and as it were Christians of our selves. To this purpose it is requisite, that being baptized in our infancy, when we could not personally take upon us the vow, and profession of Christianity, which was made in our names by others, we by our own choice openly take  
this

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rch this vow and profession on our Chap. 3.  
of selves. This the Church of *England*  
be binds all to, in binding them to be  
re- confirm'd as is evident by the Of-  
w- fice of Confirmation: and after  
eir such assumption of this profession,  
So and vow on themselves (following  
sti- therein pure and primitive antiqui-  
er- ty) she orders that they receive a  
ch Blessing from the Bishop by imposi-  
tion of his hands, after which they  
en are reputed adult Members, and have  
if- a full right to the Ordinances of the  
re Gospel.

on According to the true intent of  
to this wholesom Order (whatever  
ng is practised contrary) though in-  
re deed we are not to reckon every  
d Episcopal Benediction to be pro-  
of perly Confirmation, and so not the  
is intent of the Church contrariated  
ur so often as otherwise we might sus-  
r- pect) every person to be confirm-  
d ed, is supposed to have been so  
h far instructed, *privately* by his Pa-  
, rents or God-fathers and God-mo-  
e thers, and more *publickly* catechi-  
s zed

zed by the Minister; yea, and taught to understand the words, and sense of the Catechism, that he is in some competent measure, able to give account of his faith, not possibly by declaring it in a long formal Oration, but by answering (as to the substance) such few plain matters as are immediately requisite to Salvation. And that this is the Churches intent, that all persons come thus qualified to confirmation, both the *Rubrick* precedent, and the *Preface* unto the Office of Confirmation abundantly testifie. Now inasmuch as till such their Confirmation, and consequently such foregoing aptness, and understanding, young persons are to be admitted to the Lords Supper, it is evident that the mind of our Church in answer to this question is in thort this. Every person when come now to such competent years of discretion, that he understands the main necessary matters of Christian faith, (in which

his

## the Lords Supper.

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Chap. 3.

his own word is not to be taken, but trial to be made by the Governours or Ministers of the Church) is to make a solemn Profession of his owning the vow of his Baptism, and of Christian faith in manner above intimated, and after this to be admitted to, and henceforth to frequent the Lords Supper. Now this the generality of people (supposing them Christianly brought up, and instructed) may be well able to do *about* Sixteen years of age. *About* it, I say, for it is not to be thought the Church intended critically to insist upon two or three Months.

But in case at sixteen years old, any are unable to give such account of Christianity, as mentioned, I see not that our Church admits them to confirmation, much less to the Holy Communion. Yet is it by the way, most justly enjoined that all of Sixteen not communicating be presented, to the end, that if any of that age are not duly instructed,



structed, both they and those who have; or have had the care of them, may be admonished they suffer not their growing farther up in such ignorance, and unchristian neglects.

¶ Now as to the frequent iterations of my addresses unto the Lords Table, by what I have above meditated touching the obligations which call me thither, I cannot but conclude, it is my duty to embrace every opportunity, which is given me: nor can I justify any turning my back upon it, when God by his Ministers invites me thereto: my unpreparedness is my fault, it can be no excuse. True indeed, if unprepared I may not in any wise presume to come; but in case of my abstaining, because unprepared, I am to account and bewail that, as a double sin; the one of neglecting the Lords Supper, the other of being in such an unchristian temper, that I was unfit for it, and could not without venturing my self upon

# the Lords Supper.

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on damnation perform my Christian duty. In most congregations at present, this Sacrament is so often administered, that all the Parishioners may partake thereof four times a year: but for my part, I see not how I can approve that mans spirit, who would be content with it eight times a year, if with convenience and order he could have it oftner: And I beseech God not to lay to the charge of this Nation the great neglects of this the chief of Evangelical Ordinances, and highest advancement of the Christian soul on this side Heaven.

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SECT.

## CHAP. IV.

*Considerations to move to such care, and seriousness in receiving, as that we may receive worthily.*

**T**His the eminency and dignity of this holy Myſtery now mentioned, is a fit conſideration to move me to the greateſt care and ſeriousneſs poſſible therein, which will preſerve me from the ſecond ordinary miſcarriage of inconfideratenels and conſequent unworthineſs at the Lords Table. For,

(1.) Shall I be heedleſs and vain in the higheſt, and moſt heavenly Ordinance? Am I convinced that I ought not to pray to God, or hear his word with an unprepared, or inconfiderate mind, much leſs with a heart regarding inwardly iniquity: and can I tolerate ſuch a frame

## the Lords Supper. 361

frame of spirit at the Lords Table? Chap. 74.

Doth the Prophet tell the house of Israel, that every man of them, who set up his idols in his heart, and put

Ezek. 14.

4.

the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and came to the Prophet, him who thus came, the Lord would answer according to the multitude of his idols, and take him in his own heart, that is, him who came to hear from the Prophet with a corrupt and wicked heart, having not before laid aside his lust, and ungodly intentions by an impartial resolution of his duty (which could only turn the stumbling block of his iniquities out of his heart) him the Lord would entertain with all that displeasure which belonged to all the multitude of his abominations? Was this the entertainment of such? how infinitely displeased then will he be at me if I come, not to receive his word from his Prophet, but the body and blood of his Son with such an heart as would provoke him not

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only

Shap. 4.

only in any meaner sacred action, but in my common life; and when to this my real ungodliness, and rottenness of heart, I at once add the greatest *presumption*, in daring to come, whither none but holy persons are invited, and the greatest *hypocrisie*, in pretending by such coming I am of the number of those, who have cleansed their hearts that they may be meet guests at so sacred a feast?

Further (2.) Let me take into consideration the vast advantages of having worthily received. It being supposed that I come with a meet heart, God by this Sacrament both *bestows* and *seals* to me all the *benefits of the Covenant of Grace*, and the blood of my Saviour.

1. He thereby gives me of his *Grace and Spirit*, the true bread of life which feeds my soul to happiness: that is, he really communicates to me a *supernatural strength*, whereby I may be able, if I will make use of it, to resist and  
over-

# the Lords Supper. 363

Chap. 4.

overcome all temptations, to master all my lusts, to perform every duty of devotion to God, of Justice and Charity to my neighbour, and of temperance, and self-denial as to my self; to perform all those, I say, and that in a most lively and spiritual sort; which I endeavouring to do, by exercise of this the grace of God, shall grow up in all Christian virtues, and comfortably still advance till I come to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: I shall be as a tree planted in the Courts of God, ever green and flourishing, and full of fruit: and being so, shall be the delight of Heaven, and joy of holy Angels and a comfort to my self all my days.

2. God further hereby makes over to me, and bestows on me the *pardon of all my sins, the merits of his Son*, and a *full right* to be in his *Kingdom of Glory* a co-heir with him, to whom I am by this Sacrament most intimately united. As he

R 2

gives

Chap. 4.

gives me my Lords body, the spiritual Bread of his Grace to strengthen my inward man, ( as before considered ) so also his blood, to wash both soul and body from all original and contracted guilt, and to present them spotless, as that blood, in which they appear before the throne of God: and being thus washed and purified, the merits of that blood are mine, even Heaven, and eternal life, which God hereby, I say, makes over to me.

3. This the body and blood of my Saviour mystically and spiritually thus received by me turns even to my very body a seed of immortality, and of resurrection to eternal life. For, *As in Adam all died, so in* Cor. 15. *Christ shall all be made alive*; and particularly it is by union with the body of Christ, yea, even while they sleep in the dust, that the bodies of Saints shall enjoy an happy resurrection; and this union is by no means more intimately effected than by this Sacrament. And thus much

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Chap. 4.

much the Christian Church hath from the Primitive days believed, *Ignatius* (whose Epistles came in the ancient Church next in authority to the Apostolical ones, as they did in antiquity) call the elements thus received a *portion of immortality*, and an *antidote against death*, that is, against the power and final prevalence of it. *In Epistol ad Ephes.*

Lastly, as God hereby gives and makes over all those benefits, so he *seals* to the faithful heart this his gift, *ensures* and ascertains it as of his present giving the Spirit, and pardon to it, so of his future granting an happy resurrection, and eternal life: and what more firm and precious Seal can he set thereto, than this, that he makes us partakers of the body and blood of his Son, as a pledge of our being at present in his favour and love, and of our certain future being in his Bosom, and Kingdom? It is certain by the constant experience of all devout and serious Chri-

R 3

stians



si-ans that there is no means under heaven which fills them with more assured confidence of Glory, with higher transports of holy joys, and fawns of comforts, than doth the meet participation of this sacred Mystery. It gives them such holy lifts to the throne of their glorified Saviour whom they feed on, that they scarce know whether they are not there, and are ready to call out with that sweet Singer of our *Israel*:

*Mr. Herbert.*

*Give me my captive soul, or take  
My body also thither :  
Another lift like this would make  
Them both to be together.*

The consideration of all which, as it should beget in me an holy appetite and hunger after this heavenly cheer; so it cannot, if duly considered, but make me very serious, and devout in my approaches, inasmuch as it is certain, all those benefits are mist, and it is only an empty feast, if I receive unworthily.

But yet (3.) there is somewhat else  
which

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Chap. 4.

which may further move me to the highest care herein; to wit, besides the *loss* of so great good, the vast, and almost unparallel'd *danger* of coming unworthily. There are but two things which make dangers great; the *eminency* of the *evil* incurred, and the *subjectness* to incur it, and both points are very considerable in the present case.

1. There is scarce in all the Scripture an expression which bears such a terrible import of certain damnation or judgment, as doth that of *eating and drinking damnation on to ourselves*. It would seem to intimate a mans having swallowed his own condemnation. And what sin, saving only the unpardonable sin, do we judge more hainous than the betraying and crucifying the Lord of life? What wretch like *Judas*? Now the Apostle in a manner placeth all unworthy receivers in a parity of guilt with him, when he saith, *Whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink this cup unworthily, shall be* I Cor. II.  
R 4 guilty

- Chap. 4.** *guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. Guilty: if not of the crucifying afresh the Lord of life, and putting him to open shame, yet of treading under foot the Son of God, and counting the blood of the Covenant, wherewith only he can be sanctified an unholy thing. The Christian Church only believes touching this sin, that by deep repentance, and amendment it is pardonable (that blood having of old healed even those who spilt it) but that certainly it is a sin of the highest nature next to that of despite, or blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. True, the guilt is greater, or less according to the knowledge, and means which the peccant persons have had to have prepared themselves but in all certainly very great. ¶ And, as the danger is thus great, by reason the guilt thus incurred is so certain, and so grievous, so is it by reason of our *subjeſtneſs to incur it.* What experience have I of the baſe ſlightneſs, and ſloth  
of*

## the Lords Supper.

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of mine own heart? how apt am I to slubber over Devotions, and to dispence with lame preparation? And I can think the enemy whoever watches to plunge me in the deepest guilt will not be ready to help on my facility towards perfunctoriness, when he is sure it will involve me in such wretched guilt? Considering this therefore, that I take the ready course to ensure mine own condemnation, If I come unworthily, and that partly of my own nature, partly by instigation of mine enemy, I am prone thus to presume upon my own ruine, ought I not to be awakened to the highest care and seriousness of devotion in this matter?

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

*In what points that care consists,  
which he must take, who would  
be a worthy Communicant.*

**B**UT what care is that which will secure me from this danger, and what are the particulars of that Devotion, which will render me a *worthy Communicant*?

In answer hereunto, it is certain. *First*, that if I come not with a truly penitent, faithful, thankful, and charitable heart, honestly resolved upon impartial endeavours of future holiness, I come to this Sacrament unworthily; care therefore must be taken *beforehand* that I come with this *wedding Garment* to this seal of the *Esponsals* between my Lord, and my soul.

And *Secondly*, it is as certain, that if I behave my self with lightness, vanity, or dulness; or in any sort  
but

# the Lords Supper.

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Chap. 5.

but with the intention, and height of present devotion, I behave my self unworthily there. *Care* therefore must be taken that my mind be thus kept at home, and intent upon this heavenly feast, *while I am there* to feed thereon.

And *Lastly*, It is no less certain, that if after reception hereof, I remit my diligence, and thinking now, as to all which is past, I have made even with God, begin to take to my self more liberty of life, than what, before receiving, I could judge tolerable, or any otherwise grow heedless of my vows; I render my self *consequently* an unworthy receiver. *Care* therefore must be had of my *future carriage*, and ways, that they answer my engagements.

Now as to directions in all these points, they may be fetcht from that most excellent Book, *The whole duty of man*, where they are very faithfully and plainly laid down (A Book which he who

Partit. 3.

R 6

writes

**Chap. 6.** writes this, as he loves his soul, commands to his Reader.) Notwithstanding, lest every reader should not have it at hand, and lest the present work should be more imperfect, brief consideration shall be taken of each point, and First, of what is fit to be done by way of preparation.

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## CHAP. VI.

*Of more remote preparation:  
the Doctrine of the Lords  
Supper briefly opened.*

**I**N order to my taking a perfect account what my particular preparation should be for the Lords Supper, It is meet I consider with my self, whether I have formerly received it, or whether now at first I come thereto. And if I have formerly received, whether I now think in my conscience, I then came thereto

## the Lords Supper. 373

thereto duly prepared or no. If Chap. 6.  
I either now first come to receive,  
or now first seriously set my self  
(deeply bewailing my former un-  
worthiness) to endeavour approv-  
ing my self a worthy receiver,  
my first care must be that I *under-*  
*stand the doctrine* of this holy My-  
stery, which it will be most proper  
for me to fetch out of that good  
practical Book (containing the sub-  
stance of Christian duties) which I  
am above supposed to have chosen  
to my self to read, and make my  
own. But if any have it not better,  
and more at large, the substance of  
it is briefly this.

All mankind having sinned, and  
so forfeited that happiness which  
the first Covenant promised only to  
unsinning and perfect obedience,  
were in a state of present and fu-  
ture misery, when it pleased God  
out of his meer goodness, to pro-  
mise, and in fulness of time, to send  
us a Redeemer, who should suffer  
for us what we were to suffer, and  
by



by his blood establish a new Covenant between God and us, on those terms, that if we would uniformly and impartially receive the Gospel, that gracious rule of life which he should deliver unto us, yielding thereunto the obedience of faith, and persevering therein, this faith, through the merits of our Saviour, should be reckoned unto us for righteousness, all our sins, through the same his merits, should be forgiven, and a Crown of everlasting life, which by his blood he purchased to all who should prove thus faithful unto the end, should be given unto us. And this, that we on our part might be able to fulfil, he not only in his own good time most clearly revealed what he required of us, pressed with the most powerful motives and incentives to commend it to us, but sent his Spirit both to incline, and enable us to what God, and our own happiness, according to these terms required of us. And that we might be assured

assured that he on his part would perform what he had promised, he appointed certain solemn and religious Rites to be observed by us, which as often as we should come unto, we should vow to do our part, and he, under our use of that religious Rite, would both impart to us strength to perform that our vow, and seal unto us our pardon of all that should be then past, and of future salvation, the things which he on his part promised. These religious Rites we call Sacraments: so that in short our Church most fully and plainly defines a Sacrament to be, *An outward and visible sign* [or token] *of an inward and spiritual grace given,* [or thereby conveyed unto us] *ordained by Christ himself* [so that it is not in the power of man or of the Church to ordain Sacraments] *as a means whereby we receive the same* [viz. whereby we receive the Grace of Gods Spirit for the sanctification of our hearts, and the pardon of our sins] *and a pledge*

Chap. 6. *pledge to assure us thereof, that is, of his pardoning our sins, and continuing such the Grace of his Spirit unto us. Or shorter, a Sacrament is a Seal of the Covenant of Grace; (1.) on our parts of the Vow of Evangelical obedience, and (2.) on Gods part of his giving unto us his Spirit, the pardon of our sins, all things good for us, and finally eternal life.*

Of these Sacraments we acknowledge but two, (because Christ ordained no more, and no one ought to apoint Seals of the Covenant but he who made it) The first whereof is Baptism, by which we vow obedience, and receive such grace and pardon as mentioned. This Vow of our Baptism, forasmuch as if we live to discretion, or active years, we through humane frailty and our own corruptions, and otherwise break, there is a second Seal or Sacrament, which acknowledging our breaches of our former Vow, we are to come unto, and resume and renew our Vow; and God accordingly,

# the Lords Supper. 377

Chap. 6.

accordingly *renews* his *promise* of *grace*, and *pardon*, and *eternal life* unto us, and *communicates* further *strength* for the performance of what on our part concerns us. The outward signs are Bread and Wine, the things signified, the Body and Blood of Christ: The breaking of the Bread typifies the breaking and rending of our Lords Body on the Cross: the pouring out of the Wine the shedding his Blood in his Crucifixion. Nor are his Body and Blood hereby only *signified*, but also *conveyed* to the faithful soul. So those words of the Consecration assure us. *This is my body*\*: Not this bread is my body; but this *taking and eating* is my body, that is, (as the \* Apostle St. Paul expounds it) the *Communion*, or participation of my Body. This Bread and Wine being blessed, and distributed according to his command, God doth thereby as truly convey and give to every faithful Receiver the

\* See  
Pract.  
Lib. 6.  
Sect. last.  
\* 1 Cor. 10.  
16.

the Body and Blood of Christ, that is, the crucified Saviour, as the Minister gives him those elements. As truly, I say, he gives him the crucified Saviour, but not bodily but mystically : nor must we conceive the Body of our Saviour to move from its place, or come out of Heaven ; but his Body and blood is given unto us, and we receive them, (*verily and indeed* saith our Church) not in our *mouths* but *souls*, that is, we receive our Saviour as crucified, we receive our share of right in his body and blood, and all the powers, virtues, benefits, and fruits thereof, especially those before mentioned, of spiritual strength, and pardon, and eternal life.

By this plain view of the doctrine of the Lords Supper, I cannot but see what I am to expect at the Lords Table, that is, I am prepared (in the Apostles language) to *discern the Lords body* ; and some light is given into what I must do by way of further

# the Lords Supper.

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ther preparation; for being I am Chap. 7.  
to renew my Covenant with heaven, it first concerns me to examine, how I have broken it.

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## CHAP. VII.

*Of more proximate Preparation  
for the Lords Supper.*

**T**HE particular and more immediate preparation for the Lords Supper, the Apostle calls *Examining a mans self.* And the first thing, whereof I am to examine my self, is, whether I have knowledge sufficient to *discern the Lords body*, that is, whether I understand the doctrine of it or no. If I do not, I ought to refrain till I have duly informed my self; which I may not by any means long delay. ¶ The next thing to be examined I already see to be, my sins, the breaches of my

(1.)  
1 Cor. 11.

(2.)

# 380 Directions touching

**Chap. 7.** my Covenant with God. Now my examination of my self as to these, is only in order to the endeavour of *godly sorrow*, and that in order to *work repentance*. And the particular practice of all these I have above considered: thither therefore I am to return, and in the order laid down there, to endeavour sincerely to sue out the pardon of my sins, *considering them*, and their *aggravations*, to move me to sorrow and contrition for them; *studying* how to *mortifie* the habits of them, *resolving* upon the use of such means as God directs me to; *endeavouring*, as far as possible, the making amends to any I have wronged; and, to compleat all, betaking my self to God in *prayer*, by *confessing* my several sins to him, and *beseeching* and depending upon him for pardon through the blood of Christ. All this I comprise under the name of *Penitential Devotions*: and as the examination of my self naturally leads me here-  
unto

*Pr. Devo.*  
*Part. 4.*  
*Chap. 6.*  
*Sett. 4, 5,*  
*6, &c.*

## the Lords Supper. 381

Chap. 7.

unto, so is this a part of preparation most undispensably necessary for the Lords Supper, and for the performance of this, it is not to be thought an hour or two are sufficient. It is very necessary, that before my approaching to the Lords Table, I have for a good space set up such a weekly course of humiliation of my self, as hath been above consulted of, if my leisure and condition of life will bear it. Then may I have particularly looked over my life, and understood my self some considerable time beforehand, so that I shall not have my repentance wholly to begin, but only to iterate and further compleat.

*Pr. devot.*

*Part. 4.*

But if I cannot obtain of my self or affairs so much leisure for Devotion so long before, yet supposing I am now the first time to communicate, if I consider the work I have to do, I cannot well begin to think of examining my self and beginning my *Penitentials* later, than



than a fortnight before my intended receiving : Not that my devotion must take up the whole time, but that, being several and frequent times in examination of my self, and if possibly keeping three or four Fasting-days ( at some distance one from another ) for this purpose of particular viewing my life, and distinctly considering bewailing, confessing and resolving against my sins, I may be sure to have made through-work, to have repented of, and shut out of my soul all my known iniquities, and so be able with a clear conscience to approach this holy mystery. To this purpose ( though I should commend it to all new Communicants, yet especially to such, who have less time and liberty for their devotion ) do I commend *Easter* as the fittest time for first receiving, by reason of the *foregoing Fasts* of the Church ; which whether all Families do observe, or no, it is certain that on some of them they are called

## the Lords Supper. 383

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ed to the *publick Service* of God, and particularly to *confessions*, and *humiliation* of themselves, and not suffered (the whole days at least) to labour. And these Fasts and days of publick prayers in Lent, if the new Communicant observe, and in the serious fear of God deal plainly with his own heart, he may well be supposed, by Good-Friday at night, to have in a good measure discharged the view of his life and Penitential Devotions. However I would so cast it, that the *Friday before* that Lords-day, on which I first communicate, I might have viewed and lamented the sum of my sins, and in my *Saturday devotions* rather have my repentance to look over and more complete, than to begin, or a great part to do. Being then supposed to have examined my self, as to my knowledge, and as to my sins, (and to have endeavoured to make up all breaches between God and me, under which is comprised reconciling my self to my

Chap. 7.

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Pr. Devo<sup>r</sup>

Part. 4.

Chap. 6.

Sect. 4, 5,  
6, &c.

## the Lords Supper. 381

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(3.)

my offended neighbour (as before said in the particular practice of repentance) the *next matter* of which I am to examine my self, which should be my work on *Saturday*-evening, is the present state and temper of my mind, whether is that such as is fit to bring to the Lords Table? Now, that I shall know hereby: is my heart tender and affectionate, disposed to those Christian graces which I am there to act? *viz.*

1. To relentings for my sins, purposes against them, and resolves of holy life?

2. To humble dependances, and trust on God in my Saviours blood for pardon?

3. To spiritual joy and thankfulness?

4. To good will towards all men, charity and liberality?

If I find my self disposed to these holy affections, I am in a fit temper to approach the Lords Table. If I find these dispositions wanting,

I

# the Lords Supper.

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I am ( 1. ) Seriously to bewail it.  
( 2. ) To look over my former preparations; possibly those have been too slighty: some sin may yet lie unrepented of, which hardens my heart; and if any such I find, to repent of it particularly; if none such found, ( 3. ) an affectionate and tender temper is to be endeavoured by *Prayer, Reading, and Meditation*, Especially, let me read and meditate the story of my Saviours passion, reflecting still on his Innocency, and my own Being of the guilty number, the punishment of all whose sins he bore. But if all will not melt my heart, it being supposed that all my penitential devotions by way of preparation have been honestly performed, let me not for this the hardness of my heart forbear communicating, Possibly the stone is so hard, nothing but my Saviours blood will soften it. To that therefore let me resolve to repair, yet not so as to intermit the use of any means, and especially

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Chap. 7.

ally of frequent prayer, to dispose my heart in that holy sort, and to those holy affections above named, which I ought to carry with me to the Lords Table. And here, though to hit the condition of every soul be impossible yet it may not be unprofitable to consider of such a form of preparatory prayer as may be fit for me on the *Saturday* evening, and *Sunday* morning, before I communicate, to add to my former devotions ( which are not by reason of my having been frequent in prayer to be remitted, but rather intended. ) And such an one is this,

**O** Father of Mercies, who from the beginning hast been in Christ, reconciling the world to thy self, and to ensure as well as compleat this reconciliation, hast called the faithful to the Communion of the body and blood of him thy Son, that true passeover, who

## the Lords Supper.

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who tasted death for every man. With what Holy hands, and pure and heavenly heart, ought I to receive this the food of life which comes down from Heaven? Yet, Lord, how vile and polluted am I? my very preparations need repentance, and my tears sorrow. And besides the *insufficiency* of my repentance ( which I beseech thee in the blood of Jesus to pardon ) I have other miserable defects and distempers, which, Lord, if thou wilt not remove, I am like to bring with me to thy Table. An exceeding *dull heart* I carry, very far unbroken for my sins, unaffected too with that zeal of *love* and *thankfulness* towards thee, of *charity* and good will towards Mankind,

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which I ought to bring thither with me. That *Trust* and Dependence which I exercise on thy Mercy in Christ, I have reason to fear may be too presumptuous. But Lord thou knowest I have endeavoured to mourn over, and repent of my sins: I have *vowed* to have respect unto all thy Commandments, and not to regard any iniquity in my heart. These my *vows* of Holy life, I have ready to seal at thy Table. Oh that thou by the blood and spirit of thy Son wouldst *seal me* to the day of redemption *pardon*ing all my past sins, and by the power of thy *Grace*, preserving me from future backslidings. Make this blessed Sacrament a feast of fat things unto my soul. Vouch-

safe

## the Lords Supper.

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safe me thereby larger communications of grace and comfort than ever yet I received. And to that end, at present thoroughly *wash me* from the guilt of all my sins in the blood of my Saviour; from the guilt of all *I know*, and have confessed; and from the guilt of all my secret and *unknown* transgressions. O Lord, if there be any unseen iniquity of mine, which is like to interpose and hinder good things from me, reveal and discover that to thy servant, that by serious repentance thereof he may obtain the washing of it away, and may draw near with a true heart, sprinkled from all evil conscience. And, Lord, let thy Spirit go along with me, empowering me from above,

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and

and at those instants when I shall receive that bread of life and drink of that cup of the New Testament in my Saviours blood; let my heart so relent for all my sins, be so inflamed with fervour of Holy resolutions, of faith, love, gratitude, and most Christian Charity, that I may in nothing behave my self unworthily: Hear, O Lord, and remember thy servant for good, through that blood which he longs to be sprinkled and satisfied with.  
*Amen.*

One thing here let me admonish young Communicants of (*youth being hot and more ready to vow than faithful to pay*) that they do not through imprudent zeal intangle themselves in too severe and inconsiderate vows at the Lords Table. All known sin must be resolved

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solved and vowed against : all known duty resolved for, and the endeavour of it, with utmost strength, vowed : Yea, the means of avoiding and mortifying sins, ( according as we have in our Christian prudence, consulted of them ) must be resolved on. But here we must be wary that by particular vows against some matters in themselves innocent, we do not tie up our selves so strictly from that liberty, which God hath left us ( and we had better have studied to have used Christianly than vowed totally to abridge our selves of ) that we either repent afterwards, or prove unfaithful to our vows.

But to return. Having with some such Prayer as this above closed up my evening Devotions, let me be very careful of my carriage afterwards, lest I any wise disturb so much as I have obtained of a good temper. To this purpose, let me order all my next daies affairs ( especially if I have any command or

considerable service in a family ) that my heart and hands receive as little disturbance or avocations by them as may be ; which when I have done, let me chearfully commit my self to sleep with all convenient earliness.

And as it is my duty constantly and ought ever to be my care ( as being of most wholesom and comfortable influence ) to *sleep and wake with the thoughts of God* fresh and neereſt to my heart, ſo ſurely can I but think my ſelf concerned at preſent to cloſe and open my waking eyes with Divine thoughts and ejaculations : which if I do, I am now devoutly come to the morning of that day, on which I hope to receive the Sun of Righteouſneſs into my ſoul, everlaſtingly to enlighten, cheriſh, and in the end, glorify it.

With convenient earlineſs then I riſe, and applying my ſelf ſeaſonably to my Devotions, in my morning meditations, I ſhall find thus  
much

# the Lords Supper.

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much new convenient to be added. Chap. 7.

1. That I consider afresh ( for I am not now supposed first to do that, If I have practised foregoing rules ) how I may with due Devotion behave my self at the Lords Table, and what are those particular duties and graces, which there I am to exercise ( of which in the following Chapter. )

2. That I set apart and devote somewhat to be offer'd to God at the Lords Table for the use of the poor, or maintenance of those who are not otherwise provided for. It is evident by Apostolick order this ought not to be omitted.

*On the first day of the week ( viz. when they assembled together to break bread ) as I have given order to the Churches of Galatia, so do ye. Let every one lay by him in store as God hath prospered you. And this was of old so plentiful, that besides that it sufficed to make a feast, which they called a Feast of love, at which poor as well as rich, after the Lords*

1 Cor.  
16. 1, 2.]



Chap. 7.

Supper, refresh themselves ( and of which we evidently read the abuse in 1 Cor. 11. 20. &c. ) it relieved poor Christians, maintained the Ministry who were not otherwise provided for, and did many other publick goods. I ought not therefore either to do this too sparingly, or in any wise omit it if able. I am further

3. To enquire afresh into the temper of my heart, and endeavour to bring it to such due disposition as before spoken of. And

Lastly, To add to my morning Prayers in private, some earnest petitions for the assistance of Gods Spirit, and a due frame of mind in participation of these holy Mysteries: in which case helps and directions have been above considered, and are to be used as I find it with my self.

If after all this done, I have any spare time before my appearance in publick, I may well spend it in reading over the Communion-Service, ( which

## the Lords Supper.

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( which if a young Communicant, I may be conceived not much vers'd in ) by which means I shall be able with more readines, intelligence, and devotion to go along in it at the publick ministration. If I sufficiently understand this, the reading the Story of my Saviours Passion, and all along applying and ( as I ought ever when I read it ) reflecting upon my self, as being one of these guilty wretches for whom he suffered all this, and who upon my honest faith shall have my share in all the benefits and merits thereof will be seasonable and profitable employment for those spare minutes, and odd ends of time, which I have vacant.

Hitherto of the course of my preparatory devotions, supposing me now the first time a guest at the Lords Supper. My work will be much the same upon all my returns thereto : only, possibly, I may not be able to spare, nor haply shall find it in such strictness necessary to spend

Chap. 7.

spend, always so much time in the revising all my life, and particularly lamenting all my old sins upon every return to the Lords Table. Inasmuch as, if I am duly careful after my first receiving, I shall observe some certain fixed time of calling my self to account of my carriage, and humbling my self for my miscarriages; and by that means be better versed in the particular knowledge of my ways, and keep all streighter between God and me. Notwithstanding, *two days* before my intended returning to the Lords Table it is very fit ( though I am an old communicant ) I begin to think of preparing my self: one of which days I should be sure to keep as a Fast, and that with some thing more than ordinary solemnity; touching which and my penitential work thereon, I have above considered. And as touching the rest of my preparations in bringing my spirit into a due temper, and disposing it to such Christian graces as I am to  
 exer-

exercise at my receiving, I cannot be now at a loss after such particular consideration as hath been above taken, and is now proceeding with.

Chap. 8.

## CHAP. VIII.

### *Of Christian Duties at the Lords Table.*

**I**T remains now that having duly prepared my self in all the particulars above mentioned, ( in none of which as I tender my soul and the benefits of worthy receiving, must I be careless ) I consider lo of my duties at this holy Table that no misbehaviour here render me unworthy.

Having devoutly ( in the order \* formerly propounded ) gone through the foregoing service of God in the Church, ( Prayers and Sermon ) coming now up towards the Lords Table, I gravely take my place,

\* Pa.  
Dev.  
Part. 3.  
Cap. 8.

Chap. 8.

place: and till the assembly be all placed, it is far better for me to be upon my knees, and at my prayers, than allow my eyes to gaze, and so my mind to wander.

But the prayers beginning again, it is very improper for me to be at, or proceed with, any private prayers of mine own. Joyn I must with the Congregation, and particularly heeding every passage, put my heart thereto: And the contrary is reprehended as an intolerable disorder by the Apostle in the Corinthian Church: *How is it* (saith he) *brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, &c.* When one is singing, another is minding exhortations, another prayers, &c. *Let all things be done to edifying:* this then he thought an unedifying course: Yea not only as to all the words and substance of the prayers and exhortations going before the Consecration of the Elements, but even to every passage and particular

Cere-

I Cor.  
14. 26.

## the Lords Supper.

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Ceremony in the consecration let me keep my mind attentive ; forasmuch as all of them have their meaning and reason, and do tend to edification. Particularly the Sacramental actions on the part of the Minister, to be by me heeded and understood are,

1. *Taking of the bread and taking of the cup*, both used by our Lord, which are nothing else but a solemn separation of the Bread and Wine from common and ordinary use. Thus was the Lamb to be *ta-* Exod. 12. 3.  
*ken out*, set apart *from the Flock*. And that which is signified hereby is Gods eternal setting apart and destinating the Lord Christ to this office of being our Saviour ; in respect of which, he is called the *Lamb, slain from the foundation of the* Rev. 13. 8.  
*world.*

2. The blessing *the Bread and Wine*, represents God the Father, sanctifying and furnishing our Lord Christ, as to his humane nature, with all gifts necessary for the discharge

Chap. 8.

charge of the office of our Redeemer: his blessing him *with the Spirit above measure.*

Of the breaking of the Bread, and pouring out of the Wine, the signification is obvious and above touched.

3. *The Bread and Wine thus taken, and blest, broken, and poured out, are distributed to each by the Minister. The giving of them denotes Gods giving Christ, and Christs giving himself to us; and the particular distribution of them to each, the particular respect had to each, and the particular application of Christ unto each; and not of a piece of Christ to one, or a piece to the other, but unto each of all Christ. And further, As the Bread and Wine are not only given to us, but given to us with this design, that we eat the one and drink the other, so doth God give the crucified Saviour to us at present, whose Flesh is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed, for the spiritual nourishment*

Joh. 6. 53.

*viour to us at present, whose Flesh is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed, for the spiritual nourishment*

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## the Lords Supper. 401

ment of our souls and growth in Grace. These are the Sacamen- Chap. 8.

tal actions on the part of the Minister: Others there are on the receivers part; to wit, their *taking and eating*, and *taking and drinking*. There *taking*, signifies their particular *laying hold* on Christ by trust and faith, their flying to, and apprehending him, as the means of their salvation, and pardon of their sins, and dependance on him accordingly. *Their eating and drinking* signifies the close and intimate union of them to Christ; for as our meat passes into our substance, and is most intimately united to us, so are we hereby sealed and made, as it were, *flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone*.

All these matters ought I to be meditating, according as every particular gives me proper occasion, and the attending unto every particular passage, is that which is the proper devotion at this time required of me. Not so, but that I may  
and



and ought to send up many ejaculations to God intermixt with these meditations, which I shall have the best opportunities for, while the Communion is administering to others. Then especially, if there be no Psalm singing, I may well recollect my vows and resolutions of Holiness, which in my private humiliations of my self, I have made, and beg Divine grace, to enable me to keep them; and otherwise address my self to God, as my Christian prudence and devotion shall suggest. But certainly to spend my time purely in private prayer, so as in their season not to attend to these Sacramental actions, or the chief of them at least, is very improper and disorderly.

In these exercises of my devotion in this order and method, am I supposed to wait till it comes to my turn to receive the *Holy Bread*, which when I receive, and am now feeding on, I imploy my soul in some such ejaculations as this.

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**I** Bless thee O Father, for my  
Saviour and Lord the Holy  
Jesus I adore thee O Lord  
Christ with thine eternal spirit.  
I acknowledge and believe thy  
body to have been crucified  
and broken by thy Fathers  
wrath for me; beseeching thee  
that through the same, this  
body of mine may be sealed  
to an holy and eternal life; and  
withal devoting my self to  
thee by solemn vow, which  
by eating here at thy Table  
I seal, with all my soul and  
strength to serve thee all my  
days. Let thy grace O Lord,  
be sufficient for me.

**¶** When I have now eaten, and  
during such eating, thus applied my  
self to God, it may possibly so  
come to pass, that the generality  
of the Assembly is singing: if there-  
fore

fore the *Psalm* be pertinent and sense (as it is to be lamented many which are sung in the Church are scarcely so) it is meet I joyn with them: if it be not, I see not how I can joyn with them any further, than by praising God in my mind, by meditating in such pertinent sense as possibly the translators of the *Psalms* have corrupted. I am sure God requires me not to praise him in what is not sense, or so pitiful that my judgment cannot attend to, but nauseate: nor doth our Church injoyn it, the Metrical translations of the *Psalms* being only allowed and tolerated, not at all imposed. I say therefore, I must be sure to employ my soul in reasonable holy Meditations of Christs sufferings, the benefits thereof, of my union with Christ by this Sacrament, or the like: and thus meditating, wait till it comes to my turn to drink of that holy Cup: which when I take into my hand, that verse of the *Psalm* may well run in my

## the Lords Supper. 405

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my mind, *I will take the cup of salvation, and call on the name of the Lord:* and, as far as I can, while I drink, however, most surely when I have drunk thereof, let me somewhat more at large lift up my soul to God in some such sort as before.

**I** Bless thee, O Almighty Father, O crucified Saviour, O sanctifying Spirit, that my soul is thus refreshed. I acknowledge and believe thy blood, O Holy Jesus, to have been shed for my sins; let it rest on me for remission of them, and therein let all sins be washt away, and I sprinkled from all evil conscience, being now made clean, Oh, that I may sin no more!

Having thus received, in case of such *Psalm* sung as before allowable; I Joyn therein, otherwise, I imply my devotion as I did after  
my

Chap. 8.

my partaking of the bread till all having received, the Church prayers afterwards begin; in which with the utmost fervency of my spirit, I praise and petition God. And though I should not before these have *sung an hymn*, yet do not I depart from the Lords Table without a very Seraphical *Hymn*, if I devoutly joyn in the Church prayers: for such is that which is sung or said after the administration, *Glory be to God on high, &c.*

Before I depart from the Lords Table, I must be sure to *make my offerings*, I mean, leave somewhat for the refreshing of the poor, as a pledge of my gratitude to him, who hath thus fed my hungry and thirsty soul. Having thus done, I depart, prayers being ended, with a serious and chearful heart, and countenance; I keep good thoughts in my mind, but yet pass not so reserved, but that I cheerfully salute any of my Christian brethren, I have occasion; remembering in the ancient Church

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Church, the Assemblies, especially, Chap. 9.

after every Communion, parted with an *Holy kiss*; very seasonable may it be, and a right charitable imitation of the old feasts of *Love*, to invite any poor communicants home to my Table, for home now I hasten.

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### CHAP. IX.

*Of duties more immediately and remotely following the reception of the Lords Supper.*

AND when I am now come home, I forthwith retire to my privacy for a small space, where my business is *Inquiry* into my self and futable *address* to Heaven.

Two or three things there are, touching which, I cannot but think my self obliged to enquire.  
(1.) Touching my own behaviour, both at the Lords Table, and since my

my immediate departure thence. Was I so *attentive* and devout, as I resolved and prayed I might be? Or was I *heedless* in many points, and generally *dull* and unaffected? And since I came from those devotions, have I not by indulging wandring thoughts, or vain and worldly discourse, already lost much of the benefit I obtained. (2.) How succeeded all between Heaven and me? What found I of the *quicken*ing or *comfort*ing influence of the Holy Ghost? This is that, which they who mean any thing intelligible thereby, mean by *Communion with God*, consisting in nothing else but a mutual agency between the *mind* of man worshipping God, and *God* enlivening and affecting it. The *mind* flies out to him by Heavenly thoughts and desires, and he by *his spirit* not only heightens that devotion, but fills the mind with hopes and confidences, that its devotion and it self are accepted (and with joys thence conceived

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ceived; which, according to the devotion of the mind, are higher or more moderate, sometimes *unspeakable and full of Glory*. Touching this success, I say, I must inquire, and if upon inquiry made, I find my self to have been dull, and to have felt little or nothing either of the quickenings or joyes of the Holy Spirit, I am (3.) to examine the cause, for undoubtedly it lies on my side; I was either *slighty* in my *preparations*, or *heedless* in my *participation*, or else there is some other distemper in mine heart (possibly yet unseen by me) which causeth God to keep at a distance, and as it were estrange himself. Sutable to what I find concerning my carriage success, and present state, should be my address to Heaven; which (though haply, by reason of common affairs, necessarily somewhat brief, yet,) ought to be as affectionate as may be. Possibly, the following form may not be unfit (if for use, yet not) for direction.

T

My



**M**Y soul and all within  
me bleſſeth thee, O  
Lord my God, for that bread  
of life, and cup of ſalvation  
from which I now come. What  
am I that thou ſhouldeſt feed  
me from Heaven, and aſſume  
me into ſo intimate an union  
with thine Eternal Son? I, who  
have tranſgreſſed all thy Laws,  
abused thy Mercies, flighted  
thy Judgments; I, who have  
refuſed thy Calls, reſiſted thy  
Spirit, broken all my former  
Covenants with thee: what  
am I that thou ſhouldeſt thus  
readmit me into ſo high fa-  
vour? It is, O Lord, becauſe  
thy Mercy is above all thy  
Works, and the riches of thy  
Grace moſt inexhauſtible: that  
Mercy and Grace I adore, I  
admire; Oh, that I may Eter-  
nally

# the Lords Supper.

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Chap. 9.

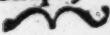
nally magnifie ! Nothing is there, Lord, in me, but what may provoke thy wrath, and hinder my happiness. How gross were my unpreparednesses for thy Table ? How many the wanderings, and how great the dulnesses of my heart even under my neereſt approaches to thee there ? Theſe may juſtly hide thy face from me. And I cannot but bleſs thee, that thou haſt not more eſtranged thy ſelf, and inſtead of hopes of thy favour, ſent me home with a ſence of thy wrath. *\* Such expreſſions as theſe, are to be uſed as they are found to ſuit with the particular condition of the worſhiper.*

But, Lord, though I am not worthy [*\* and have not taſted ſo highly*] of thoſe joys and comforts of that hidden Man-  
na, which thy choiſe and holier Servants taſte, yet vouchſafe me this benefit by the com-  
munion

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munio

Chap. 9.

 munion of the body and blood of thy Son, that I may receive such grace and perpetuated influences of thy Spirit, as may enable me to perform unto thee all my vows; so that I never, by revolting into any known sin, unhallow this soul and body of mine, which the body and blood of thy Son hath this day sanctified; but denying ungodliness & worldly lusts, may live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, and in that to come, obtain a blessed resurrection, and some (though any mean) share of an inheritance with thy Saints in light, through the merits of my crucified Saviour, *Amen.*

Having in some such sort suitably to my condition address my self  
to

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to God, I have closed for the present my Communion devotions, and it only remains, that in all my ways hereafter, I remember my renewed Covenant, as judging it grievous to violate any one Article of what I have sealed in my Saviours blood, and to have that abused blood (through which only I can have pardon) to be a witness against me. It is certain, that consequent unworthiness (that is, behaving our selves unworthy, and disrespectful of the body and blood of Christ, after we have partaked thereof) is most dangerous: for he, who after his partaking shall from his heart endeavour to live worthy, was not undoubtedly an unworthy Communicant; so that *future fidelity* to my engagements, I cannot but look upon as the most critical point, which constitutes me a worthy receiver. This therefore I must daily mind, and with all my might endeavour; and very much conducing hereunto I shall find these practices.

T 3

1. That

1. That I frequently recollect my engagements and vows to God, to the end forgetfulness betray me not to the breach of them. To this purpose it were very well, if (according to former consideration) I kept them in writing.

2. That I carefully maintain a constant course of daily devotion, (such as above described) and be sure therein to imploy my heart as well as lips; this will keep in my heart a sense and fear of God, and besides, derive his grace and blessing on me.

3. That I carefully watch and provide against, and endeavour throughly to mortifie that sin or sins, to which my natural constitution or course of living is most apt to betray me, and by which I have formerly most foully fallen. Hence is the greatest danger to be feared: here therefore should be kept the strongest guard.

## CHAP. X.

*Whether a Christian may not worthily communicate without observation in strictness of the former method. Some reflections on dying mens communicating, and conclusion of all.*

**A**FTER this particular consideration of worthy receiving the Lords Supper, the rules laid down being stricter than what most observe, it may possibly be demanded, whether a Christian may not communicate worthily, although he should not observe all these rules, especially as to the strictness of preparation, and the quantity of time to be spent therein.

In answer whereunto it must be Premised, (1.) That the spiritual estates and ordinary lives of men

are various. The generality of men spend very little time in daily private devotion. Those, that accustom themselves to daily private prayer, use not haply much to examine their own hearts, and take a daily account of their walkings, so as to confess and sue for pardon for every sin they see themselves that day to have fallen into. Others on the contrary side maintain generally such strictness in their private devotions daily. And again (2.) There is difference between coming occasionally a guest to the Lords table, when I did not long before intend it, and coming in my ordinary course when I had a weeks notice of it, and intended to come so long before. Occasional communicating I call that, when being abroad on a Lords day, or some like solemn day, I come into a congregation by me well enough known, and there find the Table prepared, and hear all, who are fit to be guests, there present invited

invited to it : or, when being in the family with some dying or decrepitly infirm person, I am invited upon short warning, to make one of that number which are to communicate with him.

Now for satisfaction to the case put, I say, it being supposed I am a person who maintain such a strict course of daily private devotion, as above described, it cannot be, but that I am well acquainted with my own heart and ways ; and there can be little on my conscience to detain me from the Lords Table. In such a case then, it is evident I carry about with me in a manner an *habitual preparation*. If therefore I by a short meditation (to which purpose, if there be any tolerable convenience, I retire, otherwise, I call my *soul* as it were into *private*, and *commune with mine own heart*) if I say by a short meditation I look into my self, and find nothing but that my breast is clear, after some address secretly to God



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Chap. 10. to dispose my heart for what I intend, I may undoubtedly approach the Lords Table in an acceptable sort : provided I omit nothing of the strictness of that care which I am to take in the *act of receiving*, nor, of *after-fidelity*. And indeed I do not know, did men live so Christianly as they should, how a Christian can turn his back upon the Lords Supper, whensoever he hath conveniences for it, without a sinful neglect. And if men do not live so Christianly as they should, I think no one will doubt but that again is a sin; so that generally the turning my back upon the Communion, except it be to leave room for others, or because some other Christian duties at that time call for me, must be concluded sinful; and sinful too not to live in such an habitual preparation, that, upon occasion, after some communing with my own heart, I could not safely approach thereunto.

But it must be remembred, this is only,

only allowable in grown Christians, and men of strict devotionals; and in these two, rather in their occasional than set and long intended communicating. To others, or to these in their ordinary course of receiving in their own Church, I scarce can judge the former directions of inquiring into themselves a day or two before hand, of fasting and humbling themselves, and taking pains duly to dispose their hearts to the highest pitch of devotion, may be omitted without sin.

¶ Touching what devotions concern a dying man in order to his communicating, it may not be unexpedient to add somewhat; but I had rather consult more generally touching what preparations for death that man should make, who had formerly in his life for a good space observed the course proposed, both in the foregoing tract of devotion, and this of communicating.

And

And for a conclusion to the whole, and by way of commendation of this Method to the practice of all who read it : I will say, that in case a man have carefully and conscientiously practised the foregoing Method, whether he be taken on a sudden by death (from which I never thought it improper to say with our Church, *Good Lord deliver us*) or more slowly summoned and conveyed to his Grave by a disease; he hath little to do by way of preparation for death, but to continue his former practice.

*Sudden death* allows little time, but to call somewhat generally for Mercy and Pardon, and with sorrow (as particular as may be) for sin, to cast my self on God through Christ. *Death*, when it gives *warning*, calls me to the fullest and strictest practice of *repentance* and *faith* as before considered. This then, if I have before conscientiously practised home to the time when disease or other accident summons

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summons me, I am an happy man ; for I have little work to do but to beg my sincere repentance may be accepted, and to rest in a comfortable *hope*, that through my Saviours merits it will be. This *hope* often fled unto, will *overcome the terrors* of death. In case my disease be any whit lingering, the reviewing and making sure my repentance is of irrefragable necessity: nor would I by any means omit the *Communion*.

But before my participation thereof ( supposing my disease, I say so patient ) I would, if possibly set *my house in order*, that is, dispose of my Estate, Concerns, and Trusts, and in disposing hereof, if I have it, it behoves me to give with due *liberality* to the poor, no man alive having been so just a *Steward*, but he hath need by gratifying the poor, to obtain their prayers and blessing, that his *wasting his Lords Goods*, may not hinder his being received into *Eternal Mansions* of bliss.

Luk. 16.9.

This

This work *disposing my Estate* though it should not begin my more immediate preparation for death (renewings of my repentance, being supposed first of all to take up my mind) yet ought to be *early dispatched*, inasmuch as my mind will be freer for Divine contemplation and devotion, when I have taken leave of worldly business.

This then being over, I, more solemnly than ever (as far as my power admits) revise my repentance, cast over the sins of my life, beg pardon through Christ, and so prepare my self (as formerly in my health) for this closing ordinance of my Lords last Supper. In this case, I must by no means neglect to consult with some *spiritual Guide*; to whom if I have nothing to unburthen my self of, yet I apply my self to, to receive *absolution*: the expresse words and commission of our Saviour, and the constant practice of the Church, being an irrefragable proof that there is weight

John 20.  
22. 23.

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weight in that matter, though not so much as some pretend.

Chap. 10.

Having now set all, as far as I can, streight not only in my own judgment, but in the judgment of that Minister with whom I consult; it is fit (all meet circumstances admitting it) I proceed to partake of the Lords Supper, before which according to the order of the Church, I receive absolution. I have here little or nothing purely new, being to proceed by my former rules; only I am to endeavour to raise my devotion to the highest pitch.

The whole office being over, in Divine and *Heavenly thoughts*, discourses and prayers, should I, as comfortably and gladly as I can, await my dissolution: during this time, and possibly again, as neer my dying moment as I can, should I solemnly commend all mine to God, by invoking the blessing of God on them, and counselling them the best I can to virtue: and above all,

I

Chap. 10.

I would press the serious practice of Religion upon them. (Mens dying words stick longest, and he is strongly Atheistical, who will not be moved by a dying mans asserting and urging the reality of Religion.) *Thus, Lord, if thou pleasest, grant I may shut up my days!*

To conclude, Know, good Reader, who lives well, is generally prepared for death. Who comes to the Lords Table otherwise prepared, than he would go out of the world, is not prepared as he should be. The former Treatise of Devotion, if truly practised, leads to an holy and strict life: the present to due preparation for the Communion of the body and blood of Christ; so that he who will addict himself heartily to this practice, will undoubtedly prove an holy person, will live prepared for all which can befall him, even death itself: and him, whom such an happiness, as to be a real Saint,  
ready

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ready to pass hence into Eternity of blessedness, free from all harms, dangers, and fears for ever, will not move to a practice, in it self so amiable, so pleasant, so advantageous, I can only say, *The Lord have mercy on*: but he hath nothing in himself, save his misery, to commend him to that mercy: and whether his guiltiness will not obstruct mercy, let him look, I should not dare to run such hazard.

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